

HANNIBAL: A LEADER FOR TODAY

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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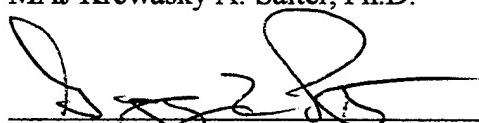
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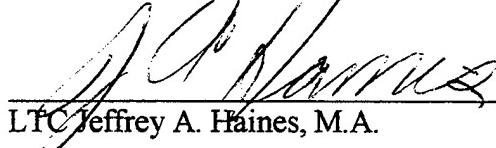
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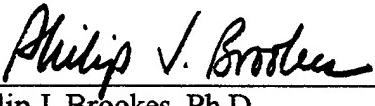
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ABSTRACT

HANNIBAL: A LEADER FOR TODAY by MAJ Randall Twitchell, USA, 159 pages.

This study reviews the life, battles, and campaigns of the Carthaginian General Hannibal while attempting to illustrate the leadership values and primary characteristics of Hannibal that contributed to his success on the battlefield. Hannibal won extraordinary victories against his opponents (primarily Romans), and usually against overwhelming odds, with a mercenary army composed of many different nations.

This study demonstrates that Hannibal was one of the “Great Captains” of the past and, more importantly, that studying his life today has great relevance for modern soldiers. The leadership values of Hannibal are core values that to one extent or another can be found in all great leaders of both the past and present.

This study concludes by identifying Hannibal’s finest leadership values and characteristics, then demonstrating their relevancy by comparing them with current United States Army doctrine, and by showing these values through examples in the lives of nineteenth century and twentieth century U. S. military leaders. Thus the purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the lives of leaders, such as Hannibal (who lived 2,000 years ago), have relevance to military leaders today and the application of their leadership values and characteristics can produce success on the battlefield.

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CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF HANNIBAL'S LIFE--LEADERSHIP VALUES AND CHARACTERISTICS

In 218 B.C., Hannibal, a young, determined, Carthaginian commander, led an army of multinational mercenaries and elephants over the Alps through heavy snows to attack his sworn enemy--the Romans. The Romans had recently defeated the Carthaginians in the First Punic War, which lasted from 264 to 241 B.C. Hannibal was determined to reclaim the glory that had once been the Carthaginians.

Hannibal's father, Hamilcar, led the armies of Carthage against the Romans during the First Punic War. It was a long war, with Rome eventually defeating Carthage and obtaining control of the seas in and around the Italian Peninsula. Hamilcar took defeat bitterly and taught Hannibal, at an early age, to despise the Romans. Hamilcar deeply regretted the loss of the Carthaginian territory of Sicily in the First Punic War and the subsequent annexation of the Carthaginian ports on Corsica and Sardinia. When Hannibal was only nine years old, "his father took him by the hand 'and led him to the altar. He made him touch the offerings and bind himself with an oath that, as soon as he was able, he would be *the declared enemy of the Roman people.*'"¹

After the First Punic War, Hamilcar moved quickly westward to establish Carthaginian footholds on Spanish soil. He hoped that he might be able to build a second Carthaginian empire in the rich, fertile Spanish climate which could challenge Rome's ever-increasing power.² As Hamilcar moved Carthaginian influence west, he met

¹Ernie Bradford, *Hannibal* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), 29.

² *Ibid.*, 29.

resistance from local natives. He was killed in battle in 230 B.C., leaving command of both the government and the armies to his son-in-law, Hasdrubal.

Hasdrubal was more of a politician than Hamilcar had been and won the support of the local natives by establishing friendly relations with them. This spirit of unity and cooperation led to the establishment of a new port on the Mediterranean coastline called New Carthage (Cartagena).

Hasdrubal continued to move west and extended Carthaginian influence to the Ebro River. The Romans became cognizant of Carthaginian intentions and sought to limit Carthaginian influence in the west. The Romans viewed Hasdrubal's movement as threatening to their designs in the region and therefore made a treaty with Carthage to buy time. The treaty was drawn up "to the effect that the river Ebro would form the northern limit of the Carthaginian sphere of influence and the southern limit of the Roman. . . . The Carthaginians would not cross the Ebro 'for the purpose of waging war.'"³

This treaty worked well until Hasdrubal was murdered in 221 B.C. Then, at the age of twenty-six, Hannibal became supreme commander of the Carthaginian Army. Hannibal believed it would only be a matter of time before the Romans broke the treaty they had made with Carthage after the First Punic War and invaded Spain. He proceeded to consolidate and strengthen Carthaginian strongholds in Spain, then took the offensive battle to the Romans on their own ground--the Italian Peninsula.

Hannibal's maneuvers in Spain (attacking the city of Saguntum, an ally of the Greek colony Marseille, which was allied with Rome) and his crossing of the Ebro

³ Ibid., 34.

started the Second Punic War (commonly called Hannibal's War). At the start of the war, the Romans were considered the greatest military power on earth. When they learned Hannibal was on the march, they moved an army to destroy Hannibal before he crossed the Ebro River, but he craftily evaded them. Hannibal fought his way, with elephants, through unfriendly natives to and through the Alps, through wintry mountain passes, and entered the Italian Peninsula to wage war against the Romans.

As Hannibal descended from the Alps, the Romans were waiting for him. Hannibal led his emaciated, fatigued, dwindling, outnumbered army against one Roman army after another. He defeated them in some of the greatest battles ever fought. For fifteen years he ravaged and pillaged Roman territory, until the Romans finally succeeded in forcing his withdrawal by threatening Carthage, itself, with invasion. With a Roman army poised to attack Carthage, Hannibal was called home to defend his homeland. In 202 B.C., at the Battle of Zama, Hannibal was defeated by the Roman Consul Scipio Africanus.

After the battle of Zama, though the Romans no longer considered Carthage a military threat, they could not rest as long as Hannibal was alive. Fearing Hannibal was fostering an alliance against her [Rome] with Syria, and his delivery as a hostage for the good behavior of Carthage was demanded, Hannibal was forced into flight. He took refuge with Antiochus, king of Syria, who not long after was at war with Rome....In the treaty of peace which ensued, he was ordered to deliver up Hannibal to the Romans, but, learning of this clause, Hannibal again fled, this time to the court of Prusias, king of Bithynia. Rome never felt secure until his death. This occurred, some say by suicide, at the age of sixty-four, fearing that Prusias might be induced to deliver him up.⁴

⁴ Theodore Ayrault Dodge, *Hannibal* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 1994), 611-612.

This synopsis is a brief historical look at Hannibal. What motivated him to do the things he did and why was he so successful for so many years? Why did the Romans fear him more than any other opponent they faced on the field of battle? How could one man and his multinational army of mercenaries bring a mighty, growing Roman Empire to near capitulation?

The following description of Hannibal explains some of the fear and respect the Romans held for him:

Indefatigable both physically and mentally, he could endure with equal ease excessive heat or excessive cold; he ate and drank not to flatter his appetites but only so much as would sustain his bodily strength. His time for waking, like his time for sleeping, was never determined by daylight or darkness: when his work was done, then, and then only, he rested, without need, moreover, of silence or a soft bed to woo sleep to his eyes. Often he was seen lying in his cloak on the bare ground amongst the common soldiers on sentry or picket duty. His accoutrement, like the horses he rode, was always conspicuous, but not his clothes, which were like those of any other officer of his rank and standing. Mounted or unmounted he was unequalled as a fighting man, always the first to attack, the last to leave the field.⁵

Hannibal was a formidable adversary whose very name mothers would use to frighten their children by saying, "Hannibal is at the gates."⁶

Many historians consider Hannibal to be one of the finest tactical and strategical commanders of the ancient world and, for that matter, of all time. Did the leadership principles Hannibal exhibited 2,000 years ago contribute to his success as a leader on the battlefield? Are they relevant to soldiers today? Do his leadership principles still have fundamental links to Army values and principles today? Are there American military

⁵ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, translated by Aubrey de Selincourt, edited with an introduction by Betty Radice (New York: Penguin Books, 1965), 4.

⁶ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 625.

leaders, from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, who have demonstrated the same values and characteristics that Hannibal exhibited 2,000 years ago?

If it can be demonstrated that Hannibal's leadership characteristics contributed to his success on the battlefield and that those values and characteristics connect with Army leadership values and principles (found in Army doctrine, the lives of our leaders, or both), one can argue that his leadership values are still relevant to Army leaders today. Clearly, the primary focus of this paper will be on Hannibal. His primary leadership values and characteristics will be determined using historical illustrations from his childhood and adult life. The relevancy of those values will then be shown in current doctrine and, equally important, through historical examples from the lives of contemporary American military leaders.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY OF THE CARTHAGINIAN AND ROMAN EMPIRES AND THE PUNIC WARS

Rome and Carthage divided the power of the Mediterranean world in the third century B.C. Rome was the ruler of the Italian Peninsula; Carthage was the ruler of the great North African Empire.¹ Rome was first on land, but Carthage was strongest at sea. Seeking to expand its empire, Rome quarreled with its neighbor Carthage and brought her to her knees during the First Punic War. The Carthaginians, by their energy and intelligence, succeeded in acquiring the hegemony of all the Phoenician colonies on the Mediterranean.

The city of Carthage (the capital of the Carthaginians) possessed vast commercial works, harbors and arsenals. Agriculture was esteemed as highly as commerce. The prosperity of the city was due to both trades. It was a beautiful city, surrounded by walls.

In 814 B.C., Phoenician traders left Tyre and, led by Queen Elissa (Dido), founded Qart Hadasht, New Town, known to the Romans as Carthage. This beautiful settlement (located on the horn of North Africa, in the Gulf of Tunis, on the coast of the Mediterranean, and across from the island of Sicily) soon became the dominate mercantile trading power in the region. Historian Appian, of Alexandria, says of its founding:

They [the Phoenicians] asked for as much land for a dwelling-place as an oxhide would encompass. The Libyans laughed at the paltriness of the Phoenicians' request, and were ashamed to deny so small a favor. Besides, they could not imagine how a town could be built in so narrow a space, and wishing to unravel the subtlety, they agreed to give it, and confirmed the promise by an oath. . . . the Libyans were amused by the modesty of the Tyrians' request. Presumably they were less amused when the Tyrians cut the oxhide into thin ribbons and

¹ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 1.

enclosed the whole hilltop. But the Libyans kept their promise, and the Tyrian refugees built their citadel and temple.²

In the ensuing centuries, Carthage grew into a beautiful city, expanding her trading borders well beyond the North African coast. She eventually gained control of the western side of Sicily, all of Sardinia, Corisca, the Balearic islands, New Carthage (Carategna), and Gades in Spain.

From the fifth century B.C. to the middle of the third, Carthage was at the height of her power. Her trade boasted such products as gold from the interior of Africa, silver and tin from Spain, elegant pottery from the Greeks, spice and faience from Egypt, perfumes from the Far East, marble from the Aegean islands, and dressed stone from her quarries at home.³ The Maltese and Lipari Islands were regular Carthaginian ports of call.

The Carthaginian "form of government grew to be an aristocracy of capitalists with a limited popular suffrage, controlled by a senate of one hundred and four members."⁴ Other essential members included two magistrates, who were annually elected, and a council of twenty-eight elders. This government controlled the trade, commerce, and military of the Carthaginian Empire.

The Carthaginian army and navy were controlled by the elite citizens of Carthage. It was from the noble Hamilcar Barca family that Hannibal took his lineage. Carthage used groups like "The Sacred Band, which consisted of fifteen hundred infantry . . . and

² Donald Armstrong, *The Reluctant Warriors* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1966), 3-4.

³ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 23.

⁴ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 3-4.

was noted for its courage and discipline⁵ and their elite cavalry to lead its armies. Carthage did not have a large population from which to conscript soldiers and sailors. Hence, they had to rely on mercenaries to fight their wars for them.

Mercenaries formed the bulk of the Carthaginian army. Soldiers and sailors from all of Africa, Spain, and later the Celts in Europe, comprised the bulk of the Carthaginian army and navy. When properly trained, they were very good fighters. Most of the mercenaries who fought with Hannibal in 218 B.C. were well trained, particularly the Spanish and African infantry. The Numidians made the best cavalrymen. Recruited from the heart of Africa, these light fighters rode bareback, guiding their horses with their knees. They were the finest cavalry in the world. Hannibal used them with great success in his campaigns against the Romans.⁶

However, the mercenaries usually gave their devotion only to the winner of the battle or the highest bidder. Obtaining their loyalty for a cause other than money was very difficult, if not impossible. After the First Punic War (fought between Rome and Carthage from 264 to 241 B.C.), Carthage could not afford to pay her mercenaries. The mercenaries then turned against her and Hamilcar Barca, the commander of the Carthaginian forces, put the rebellion to rest by destroying the mercenaries.⁷

During the Second Punic War, when Hannibal had command of the Carthaginian Army, the mercenaries seemed exceptionally loyal to him as an individual. "Carthage never possessed an army so hardened by campaigns, so inured to discipline and so

⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁶ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 25.

⁷ Ibid., 27.

devoted to its chief as the one which Hannibal commanded when he left Spain on his way to Italy.”⁸ This was probably due to his exceptional leadership style, which will be examined in more detail later. Certainly, his army had opportunities to plunder and pillage on the Italian Peninsula. Yet, while on Roman soil, he fed his army by foraging off the countryside.

At the start of the First Punic War, Carthage was the predominant naval power in the world. She had over 350 *triremes* (warships)--each one rowed by 300 slaves and each one carrying 150 troops. Rome had no navy, but built, in a short amount of time, a fleet of 120 ships. They used a Carthaginian warship that had run aground and been captured intact as their model.⁹

Over time the Romans built a superior fleet and then defeated the Carthaginians during the First Punic War. At the battle of Mylae, west of Messina, in 260 B.C., Roman Admiral C. Duillius defeated the Carthaginian navy through clever tactics and the use of a device on his ships that was similar to a large grappling hook. The hook served to anchor the Carthaginian ships to the Roman ships. After anchoring them, the Roman infantry would board the ship and subdue the Carthaginian soldiers, winning the day.¹⁰ After the First Punic War, Carthage maintained a much smaller navy than before, which was not a match for the Roman fleets.

Prior to the First Punic War, the Greeks had control of the eastern Mediterranean and the eastern side of the island of Sicily. The Greeks and Carthaginians fought for

⁸ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 30

⁹ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 26.

¹⁰ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 125.

control of the island for many years, with neither side gaining total control. Finally, in 300 B.C., the Greeks and Carthaginians signed a truce, agreeing to stay on their respective sides of the island. By the time this agreement was signed, Carthage controlled most of the island of Sicily. Carthage was not interested so much in controlling the interior of the island as in controlling the ports for commercial trade.¹¹

During the time of the Carthaginian expansion preceding the First Punic War, a new nation began to emerge on the Italian Peninsula. King Romulus established Rome in the eighth century B.C. By the middle of the third century, Rome had grown from a small number of Latin states in central Italy to the domination of the northern parts of the peninsula, with control over the Gauls. Rome then sought to expand her empire south by forcing the Greek and Brutium colonies into her empire.¹²

Some of the Greek colonies in the south resisted and, in 280 B.C., called on King Pyrrhus of Epirus from Macedonia for help. King Phryrus, one of the best generals in his day, answered the call for help. He fought the Romans, using elephants and the famed Macedonian Phalanx (a Macedonian troop formation used with great success by Alexander the Great). He won the first two battles (Heraclea and Asculum, 280 B.C.) against the well-trained and disciplined Roman legions, but barely. Phryrus finished the battles with command of the field, but at a tremendous loss of lives. The term “Pyrrhic victory” originated with these battles. Though Phryrus won the field, it was a hollow victory—negated by the number of men he lost in doing so.¹³

¹¹ Ibid., 33.

¹² Peter Connolly, *Hannibal and the Enemies of Rome* (Morristown: Silver Burdett Company, 1978), 10.

¹³ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 109-117.

In 275 B.C., after five years of on-again, off-again fighting on the Italian Peninsula and in Sicily, the Romans eventually defeated Phyrus, at the Battle of Beneventum. After his defeat, Phyrus returned to Epirus. The southern Greek and Bruttium colonies then acquiesced to Roman control. Rome had gained control of the entire Italian Peninsula.¹⁴

Rome then set her sights to the west--to Carthage and control of the seas. Rome's attempts to expand her empire led to a series of wars with the Carthaginians which lasted over a hundred years. These wars became known as the Punic Wars. Rome was the aggressor--her desire for control and world domination began in earnest with the wars against Carthage.

It was the Carthaginians who were always prepared, whenever possible, to reach an accommodation with these powerful neighbors who--so long as they had been content with the land--seemed no threat to them. It was Rome which was the military and expansionist power. The Carthaginians, as they had shown in previous centuries during their struggles with the Greeks, were often prepared to back down, provided that their vital concerns were not endangered. The wars which followed between Carthage and Rome, wars of exceptional scope covering the whole Mediterranean Sea, were always triggered off by Rome.¹⁵

At the core of Rome's military power and expansionist mind-set was an elected body of wealthy statesmen, which comprised the ruling body of the Roman senate. They controlled the government and enforced law and policy through a strong, land-based, well-trained, and disciplined military force known as the Roman legion. A legion, with 8,000 to 10,000 infantry soldiers, was Rome's largest fighting organization.

¹⁴ Ibid., 117-121.

¹⁵ Ibid., 25.

A legion was composed of one allied and one Roman contingent. The Roman contingent was selected from the citizens of Rome--those who were loyal to the state. The allied contingent came from the Roman colonies, which did not include the original Latin colonies--the core base of citizens in the Roman nation. The allied colonies (the Campanians, Lucanians, and Apulians), like the Greeks, had succumbed to Roman domination in the central and southern hemispheres of the Italian Peninsula.¹⁶

A cohort was part of a legion and contained between 460 and 600 men. A legion could contain as many as fifteen cohorts. Thus, the combined allied and Roman legions presented a very formidable fighting force, heavy with infantry. In addition to the infantry, there were 300 allied and Roman cavalry assigned to each legion. A consular army was composed of two legions, with a combined total of 20,000 to 25,000 soldiers.¹⁷

Roman consuls, the highest-ranking Roman officer, led the legions. The Roman Senate appointed two new consuls every year to head up the consular army. Sometimes, more than two legions were assigned to a consul. (When Rome fought Hannibal at the Battle of Cannae, it is believed that two consuls commanded eight legions.)¹⁸ At the end of the year, the consuls were released from consular command and, in most cases, given command of a different legion, serving as a proconsul for the next year. In some cases,

¹⁶ Connolly, *Hannibal and the Enemies of Rome*, 26-34.

¹⁷ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 48.

¹⁸ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 109.

proconsuls were called to serve a second or even third term, as was the case with Fabius Cunctator during the Second Punic War.¹⁹

Both nations--Rome and Carthage--trained their soldiers and disciplined them for war. The Roman strength lay with their land-based forces, or infantry--their legions. The Carthaginians controlled the seas--their strength lay in their navy. After losing most of their navy during the First Punic War, Carthage was forced to challenge the power of the Roman legion on the ground. Hannibal's campaigns on the Italian Peninsula during the Second Punic War were evidence of this.

Both Rome and Carthage employed heavy and light infantry and heavy and light cavalry. Typically, the heavy infantrymen for both sides wore protective garments of mail or leather, headgear, and normally carried swords, shields, or spears. Light infantrymen wore lighter clothing than the heavy infantrymen with little, if any, protective garments. They ordinarily carried a "lance and javelins and a small round shield of hide-covered wood."²⁰

Heavy cavalrymen were armed riders, usually clad in mail or leather, wearing headgear, and normally carrying swords, shields, and spears. The Carthaginians expanded their heavy cavalry arm with elephants. King Darius III and Pyrrus used elephants in combat with great success. The first historic mention of the use of elephants in warfare occurred in the campaigns of Alexander the Great. In 331 B.C., at the battle of

¹⁹ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 75-76.

²⁰ Ibid., 22.

Gaugamela, he defeated King Darius III of Persia who had fifteen elephants in his army.²¹ It is believed the Carthaginians followed their lead.

The tactical use of elephants involved charging them into the enemy lines, hoping they would disrupt opponent infantry ranks and drive the enemy cavalry from the field.

Infantry had a hard time stopping the elephants' charge because of their size and because the cavalry's horses were frightened by their smell. "Elephants were mainly employed by Hannibal against cavalry whose horses, not having been trained to them, were terrified by the sight of them and their smell and trumpeting, while native tribesmen were also put to flight by their awesome size and appearance."²²

In the Second Punic War, Hannibal took his elephants over the Alps to use against the cavalry and infantry of the Romans. When Hannibal returned to Carthage after fifteen years of fighting on the Italian Peninsula, the Romans learned how to defeat the elephants. At the Battle of Zama, fought in 204 B.C., during the Second Punic War, the Roman Consul Scipio Africanus employed brilliant tactics to defeat the charge of the Carthaginian elephants and even turned some of them against their masters, which contributed to Hannibal's defeat at Zama:

As the engagement opened . . . Hannibal's elephants were pushed sharply forward. But the Romans received them with the blast of many trumpets, usual at the beginning of a battle, and now employed for a double purpose. . . . This attempt to frighten these ill-trained monsters produced such good effect that, in lieu of trampling down the legionaries, they rushed wildly to right and left or through the Roman lanes. . . . Other elephants, wounded and chased by the velites [Romans], of whom, however, they had crushed many, fell back upon the Carthaginian cavalry and produced marked confusion in its ranks. . . . The elephants, as has so often been the case in war, had proved allies of the enemy.²³

²¹ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 48

²² Ibid., 49

²³ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 603.

Light cavalry consisted of lightly armed riders casting darts and carrying lance, sword, or both. Light cavalrymen, in general, wore little armor and usually rode their steeds bareback. As previously noted, the Numidians served as light cavalrymen and, during the Second Punic War, rode with Hannibal. They were recruited from the heart of Africa and were touted as the finest cavalrymen in the world. The Numidian cavalry proved itself far superior to the Roman cavalry.²⁴ However, being mercenaries, they were not always loyal to Carthage. At the Battle of Zama, the majority of the Numidians rode with the Consul Scipio Africanus. “Thus far Scipio’s strategy had worked. The 40,000 men of his war-hardened legions, which have been called ‘the best which had ever fought for the cause of Rome,’ encamped close to the battlefield Scipio had chosen, an open plain which offered an ideal site for his superior force of cavalry (*4,000 Numidian* and *2,700 Roman horse*). . . . Hannibal arrived with an army that also totaled about 40,000 men, but was sadly inferior in quality to Scipio’s. Its cavalry consisted of *2,000* newly recruited, untrained, and unreliable Numidians (emphasis mine).”²⁵ Cavalry was not the strong arm of the Romans. In later years, under Ceasar and others, the Romans greatly improved their cavalry.

The tactics employed by the Carthaginian and Roman soldiers on the battlefield were greatly influenced by the Greeks. The Carthaginians favored the Greek style of warfare, the phalanx. The phalanx was designed to inflict maximum shock and casualties on the enemy. During the Second Punic War, Hannibal modified the use of the phalanx to better serve his purposes on the battlefield.

²⁴ Ibid., 25.

²⁵ Armstrong, *The Reluctant Warriors*, 51.

So far as the tactics, arms, and organization are concerned, we do not know as much about those of the Carthaginians as we do about the other nations during that time period. It is understood that during the First Punic War, and down to the beginning of the Second Punic War, the heavy and regular infantry and cavalry were like the types the Macedonians used. During the First Punic War, the general Xanthippus, with a body of his Greek mercenaries, joined the Carthaginian army. They were trained in the phalangial tactics, and were the best troops in the army Xanthippus commanded. Later, he was placed in command of all the Carthaginian forces, and the Greeks, it is believed, gave phalangical training to the Carthaginians, whose infantry were already set up after the phalangial fashion. The intercourse with Greece, as well as the old traditions of Tyre, did much to influence the overall military actions of the Carthaginians, as well as the knowledge of Alexander the Great's battlefield successes. This led the Carthaginians to imitate his methods as much as possible.²⁶

The major weakness of the phalanx was its inflexibility. Troops formed a long and extended line, with the soldiers close enough to protect each other with their shields. They stood shoulder to shoulder using, as their primary weapons, long pikes extending up to twelve feet in front of them. The phalanx was best used for charging, especially down the side of a hill. It did not work as well on rough ground or when attacking up a hill. This type of formation lacked the maneuverability and mobility which the smaller cohorts of the Roman legion possessed. The phalanx was a closed order; the Roman legion was an open order.

²⁶ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 26.

The Greeks preferred their one-shock concept of warfare, and used their light troops for duty when battle required an “open order” of formation. The Romans adopted the idea of a battle formation which gave each man more individual room for fighting, and provided greater flexibility in battle, if they were losing, by rapidly bringing in fresh troops or reserves, as needed. Over time, this formation was perfected and generally developed into three lines. The best soldiers (veterans) were put in the rear, and the least experienced or weaker soldiers were placed in the front. Intervals were created in the three lines so that the rear line of veterans could advance through the leading lines, if necessary, to attack the enemy. This was done if the front lines were overmatched, or if holes in the lines needed to be filled in order to maintain one solid front. Thus, the Roman legion fought as an “open order” but could rapidly transition to a “closed order” by simple maneuvering of the rear lines to the front lines.²⁷

The flexibility of the Roman legion caused Hannibal to carefully re-examine the position of his forces on an open field. In Hannibal’s battles with the Romans during the Second Punic War, he exploited the Roman consular belief that the legion was invincible. Hannibal turned the arrogance of the early Roman consuls to his advantage because they failed to recognize their own vulnerabilities. Because of their defeats they learned to adapt to the different tactics, techniques, and procedures of Hannibal. In this way, Hannibal contributed to the perfection of the Roman military study and art of war.²⁸

Having briefly discussed the background and status of the Carthaginian and Roman governments, a synopsis of the three Punic wars, fought between 264 B.C. and

²⁷ Ibid., 43.

²⁸ Ibid., 632.

146 B.C., is in order. To understand why Hannibal initiated the Second Punic War, the events of the First Punic War must be explained.

Not long after the war with Pyrrhus, the First Punic War began. It lasted from 264 B.C. to 241 B.C.. During the First Punic War, Hannibal's father, Hamilcar Barca, rose to prominence. He was recognized as a great soldier because of his heroic seven-year defense of the island of Sicily. Hamilcar was forced to leave Sicily after the Roman Consul Regulus defeated the Carthaginian navy at the battle of Ecnomus in 256 B.C.²⁹

Rome initiated the war because of its desire for imperialism, jealousy of the sea power possessed by its Carthaginian neighbor, and fear that Carthage would expand her territorial designs beyond the confines of Sicily to the Italian Peninsula. "As Roman influence spread throughout Italy, and particularly to the southern end of the peninsula, the two states may seem almost literally to have been on a collision course. Roman troops in Rhegium were, after all, less than ten miles from the shores of Sicily, an island in which Carthage had had an interest for some three centuries. Mutual enmity of Pyrrhus might postpone the inevitable, but once that was removed, it was only, it may seem, a matter of time."³⁰

The terms of an earlier treaty between Rome and Carthage, 279/278 B.C., defined their spheres of influence, and Rome agreed to stay out of Sicily. The spark that ignited the war was set off in the northeast corner of Sicily, at the settlement of Messana. The settlement came under attack from Heiro, ruler of Syracuse. The people of Messana

²⁹ Ibid., 125.

³⁰ J. F. Lazenby, *The First Punic War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 35.

asked for help from both Rome and Carthage. Carthage had a fleet at the Lipari Islands. The commander of the fleet heard of the Mamertines problems at Messana and persuaded Heiro to abandon his plans to take Messana by claiming that Messana was an ally of Carthage. The Carthaginians soon set up a garrison in Messana, which some of the Mamertines complained about to Rome. "It appeared to the Romans if Messana fell into their [Carthaginian] hands--'they would prove most troublesome and dangerous neighbors;' to abandon Messana might allow them 'as it were to build a bridge for their crossing to Italy.'"³¹ Rome's decision to aid Messana in expelling the Carthaginian garrison ignited the First Punic War.

Rome knew she would have to take control of the Mediterranean Sea away from Carthage in order to expel Carthaginian influence in Sicily and win the battle. Rome had to build a navy and defeat the Carthaginians in their strongest arm of the military--their sea power. Rome immediately went to work and built a navy using a captured Carthaginian warship as their guide. The extraordinary capability of the Romans was illustrated dramatically in the fifth year of the war (260 B.C.) when the Consul Duilius won a large naval victory over the more experienced Carthaginians. Then, in the eighth year (257 B.C.), the Romans won another significant naval victory with a fleet of three hundred and fifty vessels commanded by the Consul Regulus.³²

After defeating the Carthaginians in the decisive naval battle of Ecnomus in 257 B.C., the Consul Regulus sailed to Africa with the intent of destroying Carthage. A

³¹ Ibid., 37.

³² Dodge, *Hannibal*, 123.

Carthaginian army led by the mercenary general, Xanthippus, challenged Regulus. Xanthippus met Regulus with twelve thousand foot, four thousand horse, and one hundred elephants on the plains of North Africa “where the cavalry and elephants could have free play.”³³ At Tunes, in 255 B.C., the armies came together and the Carthaginians, led by Xanthippus, annihilated the army of Regulus. This failed campaign ended direct Roman threats to Carthage in the First Punic War.

Meanwhile, while the sea war raged on, so did the war on the island of Sicily, until the Romans managed to push the Carthaginians back to the western end. It was at this point (247 B.C.) that Hamilcar Barca was given command of the Carthaginian forces on Sicily. Hamilcar fought a desperate, but brilliant, defensive campaign for over six years. However, with the Romans in control of the Mediterranean Sea, Hamilcar was forced to relinquish his defense of Sicily. Hamilcar, “the unconquered general of a vanquished nation, descended from the mountains which he had defended so long and delivered to the new masters of the island the fortresses which the Phoenicians had held in their uninterrupted possession for at least four hundred years.”³⁴

Hamilcar’s withdrawal from Sicily ended the First Punic War. This concluded Carthage’s mercantile and naval domination of the Mediterranean. Additionally, the terms agreed upon with the Romans were extremely difficult for the Carthaginians to bear. Lazenby spells out the terms of their settlement after their defeat by the Romans.

The terms eventually agreed upon . . . were that the Carthaginians should evacuate the whole of Sicily and not make war upon Hiero or bear arms against the Syracusans and their allies; that they should hand over all prisoners without ransom, and should pay an indemnity of 2,200 Euboic talents (nearly 56 tons) of silver in 20 annual instalments. These terms were, however, subject to ratification

³³ Ibid., 128.

³⁴ Ibid., 132.

by the Roman People, and were rejected when referred to Rome. . . . [After subsequent negotiations] . . . the time for paying the indemnity was halved, and a further 1,000 talents added; in addition, the evacuation of the islands between Sicily and Italy--certainly the Lipari islands and possibly the Aegates--was required.³⁵

Thus ended the First Punic War, with Hamilcar Barca charged by his government to lead an overland expedition to Iberia (Spain), where Carthage could once again build their commerce, expand their civilization, and regain trade. Hamilcar left for Iberia in 236 B.C. Just nine years later, Hamilcar had conquered most of the southern regions of the peninsula, placing the power of Carthage on a firm foundation once again.³⁶

In 228 B.C., Hamilcar Barca was killed in a campaign against one of the native Iberian tribes. Command was immediately transferred to his son-in-law Hasdrubal the Handsome. Hasdrubal continued the policies initiated by Hamilcar, but was more diplomatic in his approach with the Iberian natives. The effects were astounding and, in short order, he established New Carthage, or Cartagena, in the new land. New Carthage and other settlements as far north as the Ebro River paid their tributes to Carthage.³⁷

Not all colonies along the Iberian coast welcomed the Carthaginians. One such Greek colony, Saguntum, was concerned by the spread of Carthaginian influence in the region and asked the Romans for protection. Rome was grateful for the opportunity to curb Carthaginian influence by placing a garrison at Saguntum and, in 221 B.C., made a treaty with Carthage that the Ebro River would be the limit of the Carthaginian advance. Saguntum was south of the Ebro River in Carthaginian-held territory. Hasdrubal, not

³⁵ Lazenby, *The First Punic War*, 158.

³⁶ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 146.

³⁷ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 31.

wanting to go to war with the Romans, reluctantly agreed to the terms of the treaty. An important clause--quoted twice by historian, Polybius--was the agreement that the Carthaginians would not cross the Ebro "for the purpose of waging war."³⁸

Not long after the treaty was signed (in 226 B.C.), Hasdrubal was assassinated. The ruling party in Carthage immediately elected twenty-three-year-old Hannibal as the commander-in-chief of all Carthage's forces. Hannibal, though young to assume command, was fit for the task.

Hannibal was sent to Spain, where the troops received him with unanimous enthusiasm, the old soldiers feeling that in the person of this young man Hamilcar himself was restored to them. In the features and expression of the son's face, they saw the father once again, the same vigor in his look, the same fire in his eyes. Very soon he no longer needed to rely upon his father's memory to make himself beloved and obeyed: his own qualities were sufficient. Power to command and readiness to obey are rare associates; but in Hannibal they were perfectly united, and their union made him as much valued by his commander as by his men.³⁹

Hannibal, from 221 to 220 B.C., consolidated and expanded Carthaginian gains in Iberia (Spain). Hannibal fought several decisive battles in Spain against the local natives which resulted in capturing both Arbocala (Albucella) and Salmantica (Salamanca), and added the tribes along the Tagus (River) and the tribes of the Durius region to Carthaginian control.⁴⁰ After these campaigns, Carthage had control of Spain as far north as the Ebro River.

The only major city, south of the Ebro along the east coast, not under Carthaginian control, was the Greek colony of Saguntum. Saguntum, which is only a mile

³⁸ Ibid., 34.

³⁹ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 25-26.

⁴⁰ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 153.

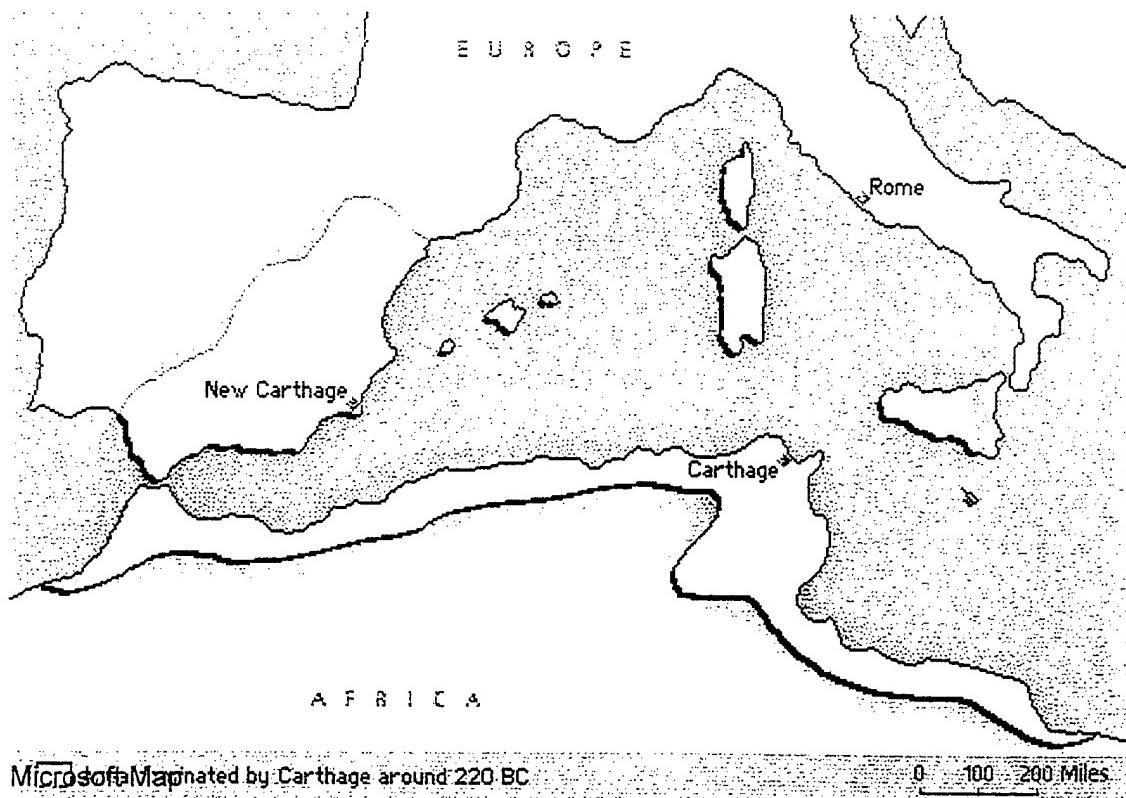


Fig. 1. Founded in the 800s B.C., Carthage was one of the greatest cities of antiquity. With its two excellent natural harbors, the city grew quickly until it became the leader of the Phoenician territories. Its armies, often clashing with those of Greece and Rome, produced such ingenious generals as Hamilcar Barca and Hannibal. The green area in the above map depicts the area controlled by Carthage around 220 B.C. Reprinted from *Microsoft Encarta 96 Encyclopedia* (Microsoft Corporation, 1993-1995).

from the sea, was a very prosperous city, and including it in the Carthaginian sphere of influence was of utmost importance in Hannibal's mind. Saguntum's strategic value to the Romans and the Carthaginians became evident as she rapidly expanded her sea trade in the Mediterranean. Saguntum chose to become one of Rome's loyal allies, even if that alliance put her at odds with the Carthaginians.⁴¹

In the spring of 219 B.C., Hannibal marched his army from New Carthage to Saguntum. He laid siege to the vast city, seeking to bring her Mediterranean ports into the Carthaginian Empire. Rome responded, but instead of sending an army, they sent ambassadors to Saguntum to protect their loyal ally. The ambassadors met Hannibal and demanded that he lift the siege of Saguntum. Hannibal refused, treated the ambassadors with indignation, and sent them back to Rome. The Roman senate sent ambassadors again, but this time to Carthage, asking the government to surrender Hannibal.

Livy gives a good account of what one of the Roman ambassadors said to the Carthaginian senate, and what the government's response was: "Fabius [the ambassador] . . . laid his hand on the fold of his toga, where he had gathered it at the breast, and, 'Here,' he said, 'we bring you peace and war. Take which you will.' Scarcely had he spoken, when the answer no less proudly rang out: 'Whichever you please--we do not care.' Fabius let the gathered folds fall, and cried: 'We give you war.' The Carthaginian senators replied, as one man: 'We accept it; and in the same spirit we will fight it to the end.'"⁴²

⁴¹ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 29.

⁴² Ibid., 41-42.

The Roman senate, shortly thereafter, declared war against Carthage. The Second Punic War would become the most memorable war in history--that war which was waged between Carthage, under the leadership of Hannibal, and Rome.⁴³

When Hannibal initially moved his army toward the city of Saguntum, he suspected it would provoke a fight with the Romans. However, he also knew that having such a strong Roman ally in the rear area of his operations would threaten his lines of communication during his planned invasion of Italy the following year. "Hannibal, after dispersing his troops at the end of the year 220, had spent the winter in Nova Cartago. There was much to attend to, for he could hardly ignore the fact that Saguntum was to all intents and purposes a Roman enclave in Carthaginian territory."⁴⁴

However, most historians, including Livy, believe that long before Hannibal even thought of invading Italy, his father, Hamilcar, had already planned to invade Italy by way of the Alps. His untimely death terminated the execution of his plan, but his conquest of Spain was strategically necessary to put Carthage on good tactical and financial footing before going to war with Rome a second time. By completing the conquest of Spain, Hannibal established a strong base of operations from which to launch a ground offensive into Italy.

Hannibal's siege of Saguntum was the act that formally precipitated the Second Punic War, but the plan to attack Rome--in order to redress the losses of the First Punic War--was conceived by Hamilcar, and executed by Hannibal.

⁴³ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁴ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 42.

Livy seems to support the idea that Hamilcar had much to do with the Second Punic War, and offers these insights or reasons why Carthage went to war with Rome the second time: “First . . . it was fought between peoples unrivalled throughout previous history in material resources . . . ; secondly, it was a struggle between old antagonists . . . ; thirdly, the final issue hung so much in doubt that the eventual victors came nearer to destruction than their adversaries. . . . Hamilcar was a proud man and the loss of Sicily and Sardinia was a cruel blow to his pride. . . . if he had lived the invasion of Italy would have taken place under Hamilcar’s leadership, instead of, as actually happened, under Hannibal’s.”⁴⁵

Following the destruction of Saguntum, Hannibal pulled together a large army and, in 218 B.C., crossed the Ebro River, the Pyrenees, and the Alp mountain ranges and descended into Rome. (In the following chapter, more detail will be given on Hannibal’s great march through the Alps into Rome and his battlefield campaigns.) After his arrival in Italy, the Romans sought to destroy him, but were either defeated or were put into a defensive posture for fifteen years. Hannibal was finally driven from Italy and forced to return to Carthage to face a Roman army led by Consul Scipio Africanus in 202 B.C.

During Hannibal’s foray into Italy, the Romans sent a number of armies into Spain to cut off Hannibal’s supply lines and communications from Carthage. Initially, their armies were defeated, but Scipio Africanus, the most successful of the commanders Rome sent to Spain, eventually defeated the Carthaginian armies there. He continued his conquest of Spain, taking all the territory the Carthaginians had previously held, to

⁴⁵ Ibid., 23-24.

include New Carthage (Cartagena). By the end of the Second Punic War, Rome controlled all of Spain.

After taking Spain, Scipio moved towards Carthage, defeating each of the armies Carthage sent to stop him. With no one qualified to lead her armies and Scipio threatening Carthage, itself, Carthage recalled Hannibal from Italy to defend their homeland. Hannibal and Scipio squared off at the Battle of Zama, in the spring of 202 B.C., where Hannibal was defeated by Scipio. The Carthaginian defeat at Zama ended the Second Punic War. “Hannibal had met defeat for the first time, and Scipio had laid the foundation for the future Roman Empire. As Polybius put it some forty years later, ‘The Carthaginians [were] fighting for their own safety and the dominion of Africa and the Romans for the empire of the world.’”⁴⁶

Carthage signed a peace treaty with Rome in 201 B.C., which forced Carthage to give up all of her territorial possessions except those within her own boundaries; to pay an annual indemnity of ten thousand talents of silver for the next fifty years; to surrender all but ten of her warships and all of her elephants; to agree not to wage war on any nation outside of Africa--and no nation in Africa without Rome’s permission; and to become a friend and ally to Rome.⁴⁷

Following the Battle of Zama, Hannibal served in the Carthaginian government for nearly nineteen years, attaining the position of chief magistrate. When Rome suspected Hannibal of fostering an alliance against her with Syria, they demanded Carthage turn Hannibal over. Fearful for his life, he fled from his country and his

⁴⁶ Armstrong, *The Reluctant Warriors*, 52.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 52-53.

political enemies, with Rome hot on his heels. Hannibal went to the country of Bithynia, where, as a guest of King Prusias, he lived near the capitol of Nicodemia, in the quiet, quaint village of Libyssa.⁴⁸

The Romans found out where he was living and closed in on his house in Libyssa. Tired of running, at age sixty-four, he committed suicide by taking poison as the Romans came to arrest him. His servants, reportedly, heard him utter these last words, "It is now time to end the anxiety of the Romans. Clearly they are no longer able to wait for the death of an old man who has caused them so much concern."⁴⁹ So ended the life of one the greatest military soldiers of all time.

Not much will be said herein of the Third Punic War, fought from 149 to 146 B.C., since it was fought after the death of Hannibal, except to say that it was the last and final war between the Romans and the Carthaginians. Following the signing of the treaty between Rome and Carthage, the Numidians (a friend to Carthage during the Second Punic War), for political reasons, attacked Carthage repeatedly. The Romans did not come to the aid of Carthage because they wanted the Numidians to weaken her even further.⁵⁰

Rome used the Numidians to weaken Carthage militarily and financially. They followed up with the demand that, if Carthage wanted Roman protection and the right to be independent, she must surrender all her weapons to Rome. After all the weapons were turned in, the citizens of Carthage were told to move their city ten miles inland from the

⁴⁸ Ibid., 53.

⁴⁹ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 18-19.

⁵⁰ Armstrong, *The Reluctant Warriors*, 60-61.

coast of the Mediterranean. A ridiculous request--which obtained the desired result--the Carthaginians rejected the Roman offer, choosing, instead, to fight them to the death. "In the spring of 149 B.C., Rome had reduced Carthage to total impotence. But that was not enough. Rome, as Diodorus Siculus explains, had resolved that her purpose of world domination would be advanced by a policy of 'paralyzing terror to secure it against attack.' Carthage would be wiped out to prove to the world the futility of resisting Roman aggression. This time, however, Rome had gone too far. . . . To deprive Carthage of access to the Mediterranean meant economic death to most of the city's inhabitants."⁵¹

The Roman army was based at Utica, twenty miles from Carthage. The army of 84,000 soldiers had orders to drive the population from the city, then raze it to the ground. The Carthaginians mobilized for war. Having received help from some of the neighboring African countries, they put up a good fight for three years. In 146 B.C., a Roman army, commanded by Scipio, the son of Scipio Africanus, finally overcame the defensive forces of Carthage and destroyed her.

As the city burned in flames, the writer Appian records some of the feelings of Scipio as he watched the city burn. "Scipio, beholding this spectacle, is said to have shed tears and publicly lamented the fortune of the enemy."⁵² Thus ended the Carthaginian Empire. Rome destroyed Carthage for the same reason that they pursued Hannibal: as long as there were Carthaginians, or any form of their empire, they posed a threat to the Romans and, therefore, must be exterminated.

⁵¹ Ibid., 95.

⁵² Ibid., 173.

CHAPTER 3

HANNIBAL, THE BOY, GROWS TO LEADER AND CHALLENGES ROME

Hannibal ("Favorite of Baal," the chief Phoenician deity) was born in B.C. 249. He had been a mere stripling when he first accompanied his father to Spain in 236 B.C. He had always shown clear-cut powers of intellect, and had received the best of educations, under the careful scrutiny of Hamilcar, who was equally fond of the lad and proud of his evident capacity. Hannibal and his brothers, Hasdrubal, Mago, and Hanno--**the lion's brood**--were all born and trained to arms, and all nobly fulfilled their mission. Three died on the field; the greatest lived to aid his country in her dire extremity.¹

Dodge, *Hannibal*

What little is known of Hannibal's early life comes primarily from the Roman historians Livy and Polybius. Hannibal was born in Carthage, the son of noble Hamilcar Barca. In addition to four brothers, he also had two sisters. One sister was married to a Massylian prince and the other was married to Hasdrubal the Handsome, who preceded Hannibal as the governor/commander in Spain.² As previously stated, the Barcas were one of the most influential families in the Carthaginian government. Hannibal's father, Hamilcar, led the Carthaginian armies on Sicily during the First Punic War against the Romans. He also headed the Carthaginian expansionism into Spain and was known for establishing a permanent foothold in the region.³

¹Dodge, *Hannibal*, 148-149.

² Ibid., 614.

³ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 27-31.



Fig. 2. Hannibal was the son of Hamilcar Barca. At the age of nine Hannibal accompanied his father on the Carthaginian invasion to conquer Spain. Before embarking on the journey, Hamilcar made Hannibal vow eternal vengeance on Rome, the bitter enemy of Carthage. Hannibal assumed command of the Carthaginian armies in his early twenties after the assassination of his brother-in-law, Hasdrubal. In just two years time he had conquered all of Spain between the Tagus and Ebro rivers, with the exception of Saguntum. Saguntum was also taken after an eight-month siege. Hannibal's march on Rome from Spain across the Alps in 218-217 B.C. is one of the greatest military feats of all time. He remained in Italy for fifteen years, defeating the Romans in many great military battles. Although he was badly outnumbered by the Romans, he nearly annihilated their forces at the Battle of Cannae in 216 B.C. Carthage was unable to send Hannibal reinforcements after that time, but Hannibal managed to keep his armies alive by foraging the Roman countryside. Hannibal was finally forced to return to Africa, in 202 B.C., to protect the city of Carthage. Reprinted from *Microsoft Encarta 96 Encyclopedia* (Microsoft Corporation, 1993-1995).

Hannibal's education originated with the Greeks. He had two tutors, Philenus and Sosyles (a Macedonian).⁴ At a very young age, his father taught him in the art and discipline of war, as well. His first memories of his father were as a soldier, as they traveled together to Spain. Hannibal, the lad, was often seen accompanying his father in the camps of the Carthaginian armies, and exhibited great aptitude for learning the skills of war. With the exception of his early childhood years, he did not spend much of his life in the splendor of the city of Carthage. While in exile, Hannibal told Antiochus the Great (ruler of Syria) that at the age of nine, in 237 B.C., he accompanied his father on the long march to Spain.⁵ It was on this journey that Hamilcar took him to the altar of Melqart and swore him with an oath to be the declared enemy of the Roman people. Hannibal lived in Spain as a young boy, as a teen, and then as an adult. He did not return to Carthage until 203 B.C., following his departure from Italy, to defend Carthage from Roman invasion.⁶

Hannibal was a very bright and gifted man, even devoting some of his time to writing literature. He wrote some books in Greek, including one about the acts of Cnaeus Manlius Vulso in Asia, addressed to the Rhodians.⁷ He owed these advantages in intelligence not only to nature, which had endowed him with her best, but also to a broad instruction.⁸

⁴ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 615.

⁵ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 29.

⁶ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 593-594.

⁷ Ibid., 615.

⁸ Ibid., 615.

Hannibal is said to have been handsome. He was believed to have married, but little is known of his Spanish wife, Imilcea, and whether they had children. Hannibal spent most of his life in the field, living the life of a soldier--not conducive to raising a family. His character was circumspect, with few vices. He drank little alcoholic beverage, and the second-century historian Justin, said that he exhibited so much pudicity towards his many female captives that one would scarcely credit his having been born in Africa. It is interesting to note that even in this early period racial bias may have existed.⁹

Unfortunately, there is not much personal information available about Hannibal because most of it was destroyed when the Romans razed Carthage and the Carthaginians kept few records. Also, after the Romans destroyed Carthage, most of the libraries which had survived the destruction were given away to neighboring African princes who were able to read Punic but, unfortunately, did not care much for books. The few people who did survive never managed to rebuild their city and, in time, their traditions were lost.¹⁰

Most of what we know of Hannibal's personal life, his talents, and leadership characteristics come from the writings of Roman historians and are based almost entirely on his military conquests. It is said Hannibal was a hard worker, rising early in the morning, eating perhaps once a day, and retiring late at night. He was an expert in the arms of his day. He led his men from the front, and it was this great leadership characteristic, along with his personal courage, which most appealed to his soldiers and

⁹ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 38.

¹⁰ Harold Lamb, *Hannibal: One Man Against Rome* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1958), 9-10.

accounted for their loyalty towards him. He was very skillful in sports and was inexhaustible in the performance of his duty. He was more daring than any other soldier under his command. Yet, he was both their comrade and master of the entire army. He was noted for his skillful horsemanship, and took great pride in the quality of his arms and steeds.¹¹

Great as his courage was, Hannibal also had a sense of humor and used this to his advantage in tough situations. An example of this was demonstrated at the Battle of Cannae, fought against the Romans in 216 B.C. As the battle commenced, 80,000 Romans took to the field in line after line, legion after legion. The Roman consul Varro displayed his purple cloak to signal the start of the battle.

This boldness of the consul, says Plutarch, and the numerosness of his army, double theirs, startled the Carthaginians; but Hannibal commanded them to their arms, and with a small train rode out to take a full prospect of the enemy. . . . One of his followers, called Gisgo, . . . told him that the numbers of the enemy were astonishing; to which Hannibal replied with a serious countenance, "There is one thing, Gisgo, yet more astonishing, which you take no notice of;" and when Gisgo inquired what, answered, that "in all those great numbers before us, there is not one man called Gisgo." This unexpected jest of their general made all the company laugh, and as they came down from the hill they told it to those whom they met, which caused general laughter amongst them all, from which they were hardly able to recover themselves.¹²

Hannibal had great confidence in his men, which was fortified by his intense dedication and loyalty to his country. He firmly believed Rome had wronged his country after the First Punic War. He sought to redress Carthaginian grievances by attacking the Romans. Once Hannibal became commander of all Carthaginian forces, he was persistent in the prosecution of the war against the Romans and was totally committed to

¹¹ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 617.

¹² Ibid., 617.

doing whatever it took to win on the battlefield, even if it meant marching an army with elephants through hostile territory and the Alps to accomplish his objectives. He possessed an iron will that could be neither bent nor discouraged under the most adverse circumstances.

He was also kind, compassionate, loyal, and friendly to his allies. While marching through the Alps, one friendly tribe of Gauls provided him guides and supplies. He, in turn, obliterated their local enemies for them.

Another example of his kindness was shown in his treatment of allied prisoners after a battle. The Roman prisoners were processed and chained, but the allied soldiers (non-Roman citizens), who fought with the Roman soldiers, were released and allowed to return to their homes. In this way, Hannibal made it clear his war was only against the Romans—not those forced to fight with them. The Roman soldiers were retained as prisoners to be ransomed to their government. However, there were exceptions to this policy: “the ransom for Romans was to be fixed at 300 *denarii* a head, for allies at 200, for slaves at 100; and when the money was paid they were allowed to go free with not more than a single garment apiece.”¹³ After the Battle of Cannae (216 B.C.) cavalry prisoners were offered the opportunity to ransom themselves at 500 denarii, foot soldiers at 300 *denarii*, and slaves at 100 *denarii*.¹⁴

Hannibal had another purpose in releasing the prisoners. He wanted to show them his war was with Rome—not them, and that this was their opportunity to throw off the shackles of an oppressive tyrant. He believed this humane treatment of prisoners, along

¹³ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 152.

¹⁴ Ibid., 158.

with his tremendous success on the battlefield, would encourage some of Rome's allies to join with him. Hannibal knew the allies would have to revolt against Rome in order for him to gain military and political success, and thus achieve ultimate success. The entire Roman campaign of the Second Punic War shows that he was only partially successful in this endeavor and failure to gain the allies' support was one of the *primary* reasons he ultimately failed in his enterprise.

The Romans recognized the importance of keeping their allies aligned with them and knew it would be extremely dangerous for them to lose their allies to Hannibal. They endeavored to retain their allies. Some of the allies did turn to Hannibal, however. In northern Italy, the Gauls joined him as he descended from the Alps. Later, the Tarentines, Caupuans, and others in the south joined him.¹⁵ However, he did not win over enough allies to totally overthrow the government of Rome, nor deny them the manpower to refurbish the legions. For instance, the Latin colonies under Rome remained loyal to Rome throughout the entire war and never sided with Hannibal (although twelve of their states refused to provide conscripts and money to Rome for part of the war). Those twelve states (Nepete, Narnia, Interamna, Carseoli, Cales, Sutrium, Alba, Ardea, Sora, Suessa, Setia, and Circeii) were later punished by Rome. They were forced to supply Rome with twice the number of men with which they were normally charged.¹⁶

¹⁵ Polybius, *The General History of the Wars of the Romans*, translated by Mr. Hampton (London: J. Davis, 1812), 128.

¹⁶ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 577.

Hannibal realized his success depended upon his diplomatic strategies, not his military conquests. When his diplomatic hopes began to wane (after the Battle of Canae), his military aspirations began to dwindle as well.¹⁷

Hannibal was intelligent in the art of war. He was a tactical genius on the battlefield, and a master strategist. Hannibal had an uncanny ability to see the whole picture and develop long term strategy to achieve his military and political objectives. His strategy to defeat the Romans consisted of a scorched earth policy. In addition, he wanted Rome's allies to rebel against her and join him. He knew that in order to conquer Rome, he would have to achieve both of these objectives or destroy Rome's ability to wage war. This meant destroying her sustenance, the source from whence she sustained her warfighting capability for the legions. For this reason, he allowed his soldiers to pillage and plunder the Roman countryside, thus denying the Roman legions of valuable food and supplies.¹⁸

He also used foraging as a weapon to force the Roman leadership to take military action against him. He knew if he attacked the common people of Rome—burned their homes and took their food, they would seek protection from their government. The Roman army could not stand by and watch him destroy the countryside without challenging him on the battlefield. When the Roman armies came to destroy him, Hannibal was waiting for them. Hannibal's grand strategy included defeating the Roman army in a decisive battle, then pursuing a political settlement.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid., 639.

¹⁸ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 351.

¹⁹ Ibid., 353.

His “scorched earth” strategy was similar to the strategy Major General (MG) William T. Sherman would, many centuries later, employ during the American Civil War when he marched through Atlanta to the Georgia coast. In his infamous 1,000-mile march, Sherman made Georgia howl as he scorched everything in his path, decisively engaging Confederate armies and destroying them. Sherman’s strategy paid off and the march helped end the Civil War.²⁰ Though Hannibal’s strategy was similar, it did not produce the same results.

Hannibal also foraged to feed his army. The words of Fabius (a former consul) spoken to Ameilius (a consul preparing to fight Hannibal) describe the plight of Hannibal on the Italian Peninsula: “Hannibal . . . is on foreign and hostile soil, far from home and country surrounded by every menace, every danger; for him there is no peace on land, or sea . . . he has nothing to live on beyond the plunder of a day.”²¹ After the Carthaginians’ defeat in the First Punic War, they no longer controlled the seas, nor did they possess the naval strength to supply Hannibal with large quantities of supplies by way of the sea. After Hannibal’s descent through the Alps, Rome invaded Spain, severing Hannibal’s lines of communication with New Carthage. Hannibal then obtained supplies and sustained his army with food stores taken from the Romans. For the fifteen years he was in Italy, he successfully fed his army off the land.

Hannibal, the commander, was known for his ability to discern his enemy’s weaknesses. This extraordinary leader went to great lengths to learn about his enemy and then use that knowledge to his advantage on the battlefield. Hannibal’s knowledge of his

²⁰ Patricia L. Faust, ed., *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Civil War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 682.

²¹ Livy, *Hannibal*, 138-139.

enemy, his tactical genius, and the Romans' false pride (sense of invulnerability), contributed to many of the Romans' early defeats. Polyibus records the words of the consul Publius (who was sent to check Hannibal's advance after he descended from the Alps), given in a speech to his soldiers before doing battle with Hannibal the first time. His words conveyed the false pride of the Romans and the way they underestimated Hannibal.

Behold, then, . . . [H]Annibal is indeed arrived in Italy, but his army is lost among the mountains; and even the few that escaped are so much wasted with fatigue, so worn and exhausted by the length and difficulties of their march, that both men and horses are alike disabled and become unfit for all the services of war. To conquer such an enemy it must surely be sufficient to shew yourselves but once before them. But if any thing be still wanting to fix your confidence, let my presence here among you be considered as a certain pledge of your success. For it never can be thought that I should thus have left the fleet, with the affairs of Spain that were entrusted to my care, and have run with so much diligence to join the army in this country, unless I had been first assured by the most solid reasons, not only that this measure was both wise and necessary in the present circumstances, but that I was hastening also to reap the fruits of an easy and undoubted victory.²²

The Romans, initially, did not perceive Hannibal as a serious threat and, therefore, did not attempt to study him as he had studied them. At the beginning of the Second Punic War, there was an attitude of near complacency in the Roman leadership. They figured they had beaten the Carthaginians in the First Punic War, and, therefore, Hannibal did not pose any serious threat to them. It was not until after the Romans had suffered one tactical defeat after another that they began to study Hannibal's tactics in order to learn how to defeat him. "To be driven to the defensive was so much of a novelty to her [Rome] that it required the lesson of three or four bitter defeats to teach her

²² Polybius, *General History*, 177.

that there was something greater than even her military audacity in the genius of Hannibal.”²³

Thus, Hannibal’s finest qualities were his ability to know his enemy, both tactically and personally, and to understand their character and personality. Hannibal used spies, prisoners, and the local populace to gain information on his opponents. There was little about the Romans which Hannibal did not know. Even the secrets of their capital and of their armies’ headquarters were delivered to him. His ability to obtain information was uncanny.²⁴

Rarely did his intelligence network fail him. However, an example of one such time was when his brother Hasdrubal, trying to unite with him in Italy, was killed by the consul Nero. Historians cannot explain the reason for this. How could Hannibal, who was so extremely skillful and careful, have been kept ignorant, even by Nero’s excellent efforts to deceive him? He appears to have been kept in the dark, however; he remained quietly in camp while his brother was being destroyed.²⁵

On more than one occasion, Hannibal used information about his enemies to provoke them to engage him in battle before they were ready to do so. By forcing a consul to fight on his terms, Hannibal seized the initiative early on and controlled the battlefield geometry. He picked the terrain, times, and places of their engagements.

The Battle of Cannae offers an excellent example of how Hannibal used knowledge of his enemy to defeat them. Hannibal, reportedly, spoke to his soldiers

²³ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 632.

²⁴ Ibid., 319.

²⁵ Ibid., 558.

before the battle, “Tell me, warriors, could you have asked of the gods more than to bring the enemy to action on such a ground, where our cavalry is sure to overwhelm him? Thank ye the gods for bringing us certain victory! Thank me, your general, for bringing the enemy where he cannot decline to fight.”²⁶

At Cannae (more detailed discussion of the battle is given later), he knew the Roman consuls, Varro and Aemilius, rotated command every other day. Aemilius kept a cool head and, though Hannibal tried on repeated occasions to provoke him, he could not be provoked to attack before he was ready to give battle. However, Hannibal knew that on the days when consul Varro was in command the Roman army would be more likely to make a mistake. Consul Varro was less likely to exercise good judgment. He was easily provoked, unlike Aemilius. Paullus (one of Varro’s colleagues) described his leadership ability in this way: “His only harsh criticism of Varro was to express his surprise about how any army commander, while still at Rome, in his civilian clothes, could possibly know what his task on the field of battle would be, before he had become acquainted either with his own troops or the enemy’s or had any idea of the lie and nature of the country where he was operate—or how he could prophesy exactly when a pitched battle would occur.”²⁷

Hannibal, knowing of Varro’s weakness, initiated a provocation which tweaked Varro’s pride, causing him to want to do battle with him. Hannibal sent several hundred Numidian cavalry to raid a small camp the Romans had established by the river Aufidus. The consul Aemilius was in command of the Roman army on the day of the raid.

²⁶ Ibid., 358.

²⁷ Livy, *Hannibal*, 137.

However, Hannibal's raid so incensed consul Varro, that the next day (when he was in command), he responded by mobilizing the entire Roman army to march against Hannibal. As recorded in history: "That their camp should be threatened by what was only a small skirmishing force of auxiliary troops was felt by the Romans as an insult; and the only thing that prevented them from immediately crossing the river in force and offering battle was the fact that it was Paullus' day of command. Varro's turn was on the day following, and he used it as was to be expected: without in any way consulting his colleague he gave the order for battle, marshaled the troops, and led them across the river."²⁸

He fielded the greatest Roman force ever used in battle to that time (eight legions or eighty-thousand soldiers) against a force only half his size. Polybius attributes this tactical manipulation, and Hannibal's use of it, to his success in drawing the Romans into battle.²⁹

Hannibal was great at building his soldiers up and preparing them for battle. After his march through the Alps, Hannibal's army was emaciated and starving. They had suffered great stress and privation during the march. Thousands of soldiers had died and morale was low. He called his soldiers together to rebuild their spirits and mentally prepare them for the upcoming fight with the Roman legions. As he gathered his soldiers around to speak to them, he brought out two of their captives (taken from their fights with the Gauls, as they marched through the Alps), gave them weapons, and made them fight to the death in front of his soldiers. Before the fight, he promised the winner his freedom,

²⁸ Ibid., 145.

²⁹ Polybius, *General History*, 214.

new arms, and a horse--the chance to live a better life. When the fight was over, one of the captives lay dead, and the winner of the contest was granted his freedom, just as Hannibal had promised. He was given the chance to build a new and better life.³⁰

Hannibal used this graphic demonstration to teach his men that to be free, to have a chance for a better life, and to have the material things they desired, they must defeat the Romans on the field of battle. His men understood this lesson. Their courage and morale renewed, they fought valiantly to obtain the spoils of victory and to be masters of themselves. At times of crisis like this, it was not unusual for Hannibal to say or do something unique to pull his men together. Hannibal, in this particular case, used his skill with great effectiveness.

Hannibal not only had the highest respect for his soldiers and went to great lengths to take care of them as well as he could (even under the worst conditions), but he was also respectful of his Roman counterparts, particularly the senior Roman leadership--the consuls. When a Roman consul was slain on the field of battle, as three were at the Battle of Cannae (Aemilius and two former consuls, known as proconsuls³¹), he always ensured they were given an honorable burial.³² This was far different from the way the Romans treated their slain foe. When Hannibal's brother, Hasdrubal, was slain in battle by the Consul Nero, Nero had his head cut off and thrown into Hannibal's camp.³³

³⁰ Ibid., 175.

³¹ Ibid., 217.

³² Dodge, *Hannibal*, 644.

³³ Ibid., 621.

These words best sum up Hannibal's most important leadership characteristics and abilities: "Hannibal's influence over his men was perhaps his most remarkable quality. . . . This control was obtained by the same means Alexander used,--never-ceasing personal care for the comfort and well-being of his army, his friendly bearing, his own example, and perfect justice in awarding punishments and rewards. . . . The marvel in the life of Hannibal is the amount he effected with the small means at his command against the vast resources of his opponents, and the length of time he maintained the struggle."³⁴

The best way to illustrate Hannibal's remarkable leadership qualities is to examine some of the feats he accomplished while commanding the Carthaginian army. Beginning with the Second Punic War, in 218 B.C., and ending with his final defeat at the Battle of Zama, in 202 B.C., the following examples best illustrate the leadership qualities Hannibal portrayed as a commander, and best demonstrate how they contributed to his success on the battlefield.

Following Hannibal's sack of Saguntum, he wintered at New Carthage. He gave his soldiers leave to spend time with their families and began preparations for his march to the Italian Peninsula. He also dispatched soldiers to areas in Spain and Carthage to protect newly gained land acquisitions and to protect his rear lines of communication for the impending march. It is believed that Hannibal said these words to his soldiers before the long march over the Pyrennes and the Alps: "My friends, no doubt you see as well as I do that, with all the Spanish peoples subject to our influence, one of two courses is open to us: either we must stop fighting and disband our armies, or pursue our conquests elsewhere . . . I have decided to grant leave of absence to any man who wishes to visit

³⁴ Ibid., 644 and 646.

his family. Your orders are to return to duty at the beginning of spring, in order that, with God's help, we may begin a war which will fill your pockets with gold and carry your fame to the world's end.”³⁵

After quartering in New Carthage for the winter, Hannibal secured his rear lines of communication, then began his march with 12,000 horse, and 90,000 foot.³⁶ As he crossed the Ebro River and moved towards the Alps, he split his army into three separate bodies to facilitate quicker movement and to decrease “the nations that inhabited between that river [Ebro] and the Pyrenaean mountains--the Ilurgetes, Bargusians, Aerenosians, and Andasinians.”³⁷ He left his brother Hanno with an army of 10,000 soldiers and 1,000 cavalry to secure the areas they had just taken and to keep an eye on those tribes who leaned toward friendliness with the Romans. Hannibal also sent some of the less-willing soldiers to continue the march back to their home in Spain. A group of soldiers from Carpetani, 3,000 strong, refused to go further. They appeared to be more alarmed by the prospect of the long, nearly impassable march over the Alps than by the fighting they would face.³⁸ Added to these were another 7,000 who did not want to make the march, which Hannibal also sent home. With the casualties Hannibal sustained reaching the Pyrennes, those left to secure his rear lines of communication, and those sent home, his army was reduced from 90,000 infantry to 50,000 and from 12,000 cavalry to 9,000.

³⁵ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 44.

³⁶ Polybius, *General History*, 155.

³⁷ Ibid., 155.

³⁸ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 47.

“Disencumbered of the heavy baggage,”³⁹ Hannibal proceeded to move his army through the Pyrennes Mountains towards the Rhone River and on to the Alps. As Hannibal moved ever steadily towards Italy, the Romans soon became aware of his intent and immediately dispatched an army under the Consul Publius Cornelius to head him off in Spain. When the consul arrived at Massilia, near the easternmost mouth of the Rhone, he did not yet realize that Hannibal had already crossed the Pyrennes and was preparing to cross the Rhone north of his position. Cornelius immediately dispatched a 300-strong heavy cavalry unit to reconnoiter and find Hannibal’s camp. Hannibal, in turn, dispatched a 500-soldier unit of Numidian cavalry to find the Roman camp. The Roman and Numidian cavalry met about halfway between the two camps and a fierce, though short, engagement between the cavalry ensued, with the Romans gaining the upper hand over the Numidians.⁴⁰ The Roman cavalry pursued the Numidian cavalry to the outskirts of the Carthaginian camp, and then left to report their discovery to Cornelius. Though Cornelius was a four-days hard march from Hannibal’s position, he hoped to catch him and bring his army to battle before Hannibal could cross the Rhone.

At the Rhone, meanwhile, Hannibal had received assistance from friendly Gauls who provided him with boats, guides, and other valuable resources, but he was also confronted with some unique challenges. These included defeating a large number of Gauls, assembled on the opposite side of the river, who were unfriendly to him and wanted to prevent his crossing the river. They wanted to destroy the Carthaginian army piecemeal as it crossed the Rhone and then climbed the bank on the other side. Hannibal

³⁹ Polybius, *General History*, 155.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 162.

also faced the massive challenge of finding a way to get the thirty-seven elephants across the Rhone, for they would not swim and conventional boats were too small to transport them. To put the odds back in his favor, Hannibal came up with an ingenious idea. He would send some of his best soldiers with the leader, Hanno, upstream to cross the river at a different location. Once they crossed the river they were to move behind the Gauls massed on the bank, and, at the designated moment, fall upon their rear, while Hannibal and the main force crossed the river.

After Hanno and his detachment were in place in the Gauls' rear, the river crossing commenced.⁴¹ As Hannibal began to cross the river,

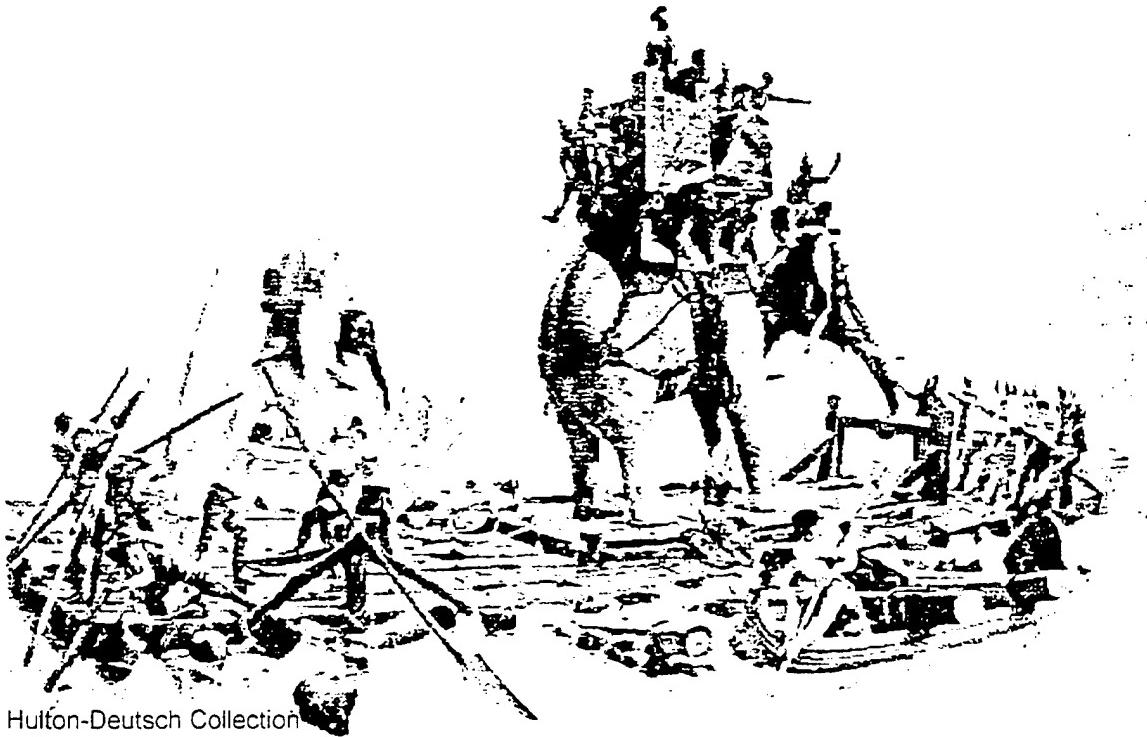
The Barbarians, as soon as they perceived the disposition that was made, ran down from their camp in crowds, without observing any order, and were persuaded that they should be able, with the greatest ease, to prevent the Carthaginians from landing. . . . His [Hannibal's] orders were executed in an instant. . . . At this time the troops that were led by Hanno appeared suddenly on the other side; and while one part of them set fire to the camp of the enemy, which was left without defence, the rest and the greater part made haste to fall upon the rear of those that were defending the passage of the river. The barbarians were struck with terror at an event so strange and unexpected.⁴²

Hannibal's soldiers crossed the Rhone and defeated the Gauls on the other side of the river. The only remaining obstacles to completing the river crossing were getting the cavalry and the elephants across. The cavalry's horses were towed alongside the boats and swam without much difficulty.⁴³ However, moving the elephants was far more difficult—they were terrified of water and would not go near it. One account claims the driver of a particularly ferocious elephant dove into the water and that the elephant

⁴¹ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 50-51.

⁴² Polybius, *General History*, 160-161.

⁴³ Ibid., 160.



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Fig. 3. Hannibal's march over the Alps into Italy remains one of the greatest feats in military history. As the Carthaginian commander, he transported a large army and several elephants across the Rhone River and over the Alps. The above illustration depicts one artist's conception of how the elephants were transported across the river. However, some historians record that Hannibal used a more ingenious method to transport the elephants. The elephants were naturally afraid of the water, so Hannibal created an earthen raft-way for the elephants to cross on. Because the rafts were covered with dirt the elephants believed they were still on land and were thus safely transported across the water. Reprinted from *Microsoft Encarta 96 Encyclopedia* (Microsoft Corporation, 1993-1995).

followed him, with all the other elephants in close pursuit.⁴⁴ However, Polybius gives a more likely account:

When they had made a sufficient number of floats, they joined two, and fastened them strongly to the ground, upon the bank of the river. The breadth of both together was about fifty feet. . . . They then spread a quantity of earth over all the floats, that their color and appearance might resemble, as nearly possible, the ground on shore. The elephants were usually very tractable upon land, and easy to be governed by their conductors, but were at all times under the greatest apprehension whenever they approached the water. Upon this occasion, therefore, they took two female elephants, and led them first along the floats; the rest readily followed.⁴⁵

In this manner Hannibal was able to safely move his army across the Rhone River.

When the Consul Publius Cornelius reached Hannibal's former position on the Rhone, he was three days too late. He was very surprised to find that his adversary had slipped away from him. Hannibal, led by friendly guides, had moved further north along the river and was already looking for a way to cross the Alps. When the consul learned of this, he chose not to pursue Hannibal, and decided, instead, to return to Italy (by way of the sea) with part of his army, to meet Hannibal as he descended from the Alps. He left the greater part of his army in Spain, under the command of his brother Gneaus Scipio, with orders to engage Hasdrubal and drive him from Spain, if possible.⁴⁶ This action proved to be extremely important when, later in the campaign, Carthaginian forces in Spain were defeated. Rome eventually took all of Spain, and Hannibal's lines of communication were severed.

⁴⁴ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 28.

⁴⁵ Polybius, *General History*, 162-163.

⁴⁶ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 31.

Hannibal, meanwhile, moved his army to the foot of the Alps, and began to look for a way to cross. Though some friendly Gauls assisted him in his endeavors, he had also encountered some less friendly Gauls along the way. The friendly ones helped guide him through the Alps and provided provisions to his army. The others opposed him as he prepared to climb steep mountain passes. On one such occasion, “when [H]annibal perceived that the enemy had thus seized on all the advantageous posts, he encamped at the foot of the mountains, and sent away some of the Gauls that served as guides in his army, to discover their disposition, conduct and designs.”⁴⁷ Hannibal learned from the guides that the unfriendly barbarians only manned their watches over the passes during the daytime; at night, they went to their homes. The next night, Hannibal had his army prepare extra large fires, then hand-selected a few good men to occupy, with him, the mountain passes deserted by their foes.

The next morning, the barbarians, seeing their positions occupied, were forced to attack from less advantageous positions as Hannibal’s army moved up the steep mountain passes. The passes were narrow, making it difficult for the army’s baggage trains and cavalry to move. When the barbarians finally attacked, they took advantage of the masses of men and animals struggling to move through the restrictive terrain. Had Hannibal and his men not rushed down upon the enemy from above at the decisive moment, he may have lost his entire army. The ensuing fight was difficult and bloody, with the Carthaginians finally prevailing. After the fight Hannibal went to the town from whence the attackers had come, took supplies and prisoners, and destroyed those

⁴⁷ Polybius, *General History*, 166.



Fig. 4. Hannibal (247-182 B.C.) marched an army of over 30,000 men and elephants across the Alps during winter, facing opposition from unfriendly tribes along the way. This feat remains unparalleled in military history. Following his descent into Italy, Hannibal fought the Romans on their own soil for fifteen years, defeating one army after another. Reprinted from *Mindscape Student Reference Library* (Mindscape, Inc., 1996).

who would had fought against him.⁴⁸ No more barbarians from this tribe opposed his passage through the Alps.

After resting for a day, they continued the march through the Alps. As they advanced, a tribe of people met them and offered assistance. They came wearing crowns upon their heads, and carrying green branches in their hands, which is the symbol of peace among barbarous nations.⁴⁹ Hannibal was suspicious of them, but when they offered hostages, guides, cattle, and other supplies critical to the needs of his army; Hannibal cautiously accepted their generosity. They moved for two days with these guides through the defiles of the Alps until they entered a valley where the army was surrounded by steep cliffs on all sides. It was here that these supposedly friendly tribes attacked the rear of Hannibal's army. Had Hannibal (who still had doubts about their sincerity) not placed his cavalry and baggage at the head of his column and positioned his battle-hardened heavy infantry in the rear, his entire army would have been destroyed. Even so, the army sustained heavy casualties of men, beasts, and baggage, but finally struggled through the valley onto higher ground.⁵⁰ Hannibal's army was never attacked in great strength for the remainder of their journey through the Alps.

On the ninth day of their march through the Alps, the army reached the summit and rested there for two full days. Hannibal's men were tired and discouraged. He gathered them together to talk with them and build their spirits. His thoughts and actions and the condition of his army are recounted in the following passage from history: "He

⁴⁸ Ibid., 167.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 168.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 168-169.

assembled the troops together; and, from the summit of the Alps, which, when considered with regard to Italy, appeared to stand as the citadel of all the country, pointed to their view the plains beneath that were watered by the Po; and reminded them of the favourable disposition of the Gauls towards them. He shewed them also the very ground upon which Rome itself was situated. By this prospect they were, in some degree, recovered from their fears. On the morrow, therefore they decamped and began to descend the mountains.”⁵¹

After resting at the summit of the Alps, the army began their descent down to the fertile Po valley and on into Italy. As they made their way down the steep trail, snow covering the ground made the passes difficult to navigate, and several animals and soldiers slipped to their deaths along the mountain passes. At one point in their journey, they came to a point where snow and rock blocked the trail down. Due to the steepness of the terrain on either side, they were unable to go around this obstacle, so Hannibal had them cut down trees, stack the wood against the rock, and then set the wood on fire. When the rock was heated enough, they threw wine on it. The combination of heat and moisture made it possible for the men to split the rock with their picks, thereby clearing the obstacle so the army could continue its descent.⁵²

When Hannibal arrived in Italy, his men were in very poor condition—diseased and starving. They had taken many casualties from their travails through the Alps. It had taken them five months and fifteen days from the time they left New Carthage to complete the march. “He now bodily entered the territory of the Insubrians, and the plains

⁵¹ Ibid., 169.

⁵² Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 62.

that are watered by the Po, though the whole of his infantry that was left amounted to no more than twelve thousand Africans, and eight thousand Spaniards; and his cavalry to six thousand only.⁵³ Hannibal's immediate concerns were caring for his soldiers and giving them a much-needed rest from their labors. After resting for a time, he began to court friendships in the area, particularly with the Taurinians, who lived near the base of the Alps and were fighting against the Insubrians. Hannibal attempted to persuade the Taurinians to enter into an alliance with him and join their forces with his, but they rejected his offer. Hannibal then marched to their strongest city and encamped before it. After three days' siege, he killed anyone in the city who had taken up arms against him.⁵⁴ This had the desired effect on all the local tribes of Gauls, and many of them soon joined his cause.

Meanwhile, the Roman consul Publius Cornelius was moving his army toward Hannibal, seeking to destroy him. He, as well as Rome, were surprised and amazed that an army had not only crossed the Alps during winter, but had survived the journey well enough to challenge the Roman legion. Even though they disliked Hannibal and viewed him with great apprehension, they also respected him for his extraordinary accomplishment. Upon Hannibal's arrival in Italy, the Roman senate sent word to the Consul Tiberius (who had been given an order to depart for Africa with a force to attack Carthage), and, instead, ordered him to join the Consul Publius to defend the homeland from Hannibal.⁵⁵

⁵³ Polybius, *General History*, 170.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 173.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 174.

Hannibal and Publius advanced their armies towards each other along the Tacinus River, each looking for the advantage, and all the while preparing their soldiers for inevitable combat. When they were within striking distance of each other, both leaders talked to their soldiers in an attempt to raise their spirits and boost morale for combat in the immediate future. The day of combat came when Hannibal and Publius encountered one another as they reconnoitered the area with portions of their cavalry. Both armies deployed their entire cavalry immediately. Hannibal placed the Numidian cavalry on his flanks, with his heavy cavalry supporting the center. The Romans placed their light cavalry in the center and their heavy cavalry to the rear. The contest soon became heated, with great destruction on both sides. Neither side gained the advantage until the Numidians made a sweep to the rear of the Roman lines and attacked the infantry from behind. When the Numidians hit the Roman rear, they commenced a great slaughter on the enemy, which broke their line in the front and forced the Romans to leave the field in full retreat.⁵⁶

Publius Cornelius was wounded in the action. Tradition has it that he was only saved from capture through the actions of his son Scipio (later to be known as Scipio Africanus, who would become famous as the ultimate victor over Hannibal). Scipio led a charge into the melee surrounding his father and carried him safely from the field.⁵⁷ Following this action, Publius Cornelius moved his base camp from the Po River Valley to Placentia, a colony of the Romans. The Romans built entrenchments, drawing safety from the neighboring colony, or so they thought. However, after Hannibal's victory the

⁵⁶ Ibid., 178.

⁵⁷ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 76-77.

Gauls, who were conscripted as part of Cornelius' army, attacked the Romans while they slept, nearly destroying them. In addition, as word spread of Hannibal's victory, many of the Gauls in northern Italy united themselves with Hannibal, making Cornelius' position at Placentia no longer tenable. Cornelius retreated south to a stronger defensible position along the Trebia River, and awaited the arrival of the Consul Tiberius.⁵⁸

Tiberius Sempronius and Cornelius soon joined forces. Tiberius, encouraged by some minor engagements with Hannibal's foraging parties, was eager for a general engagement between the two armies. Hannibal was also ready for a general battle, but took his time, ensuring the battle would be fought on his own terms and conditions. Cornelius, wounded and unable to command, could not convince Tiberius to wait until he was on his feet again, so they could approach Hannibal in battle together, choosing the time and place for the engagement. "Tiberius clearly understood the wisdom of these sentiments; but being hurried headlong by ambition, confident of victory, and heated also with the vain and flattering expectation of being able to finish the war alone before Publius should be in a condition to assist him, or the new consuls, the time of whose election now drew near, . . . he resolved in opposition to all sense and prudence, to risk a general battle."⁵⁹

The Battle of the River Trebia was fought in 218 B.C. between Hannibal and the Romans. Hannibal drew up his army to a position not far from the Romans and then took time to carefully reconnoiter the area and devise a plan whereby he could defeat the Romans. The river separated the two forces. The evening before the battle, Hannibal

⁵⁸ Polybius, *General History*, 179.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 182.

called his brother Mago to his tent and told him to select a thousand of the best infantry and cavalry and place them in pre-determined positions from which they could ambush the Romans. Mago's instructions were to leave that night and have his men assume their battle positions. He was then to lie in wait until the proper moment when he would spring the ambush and fall upon the Roman rear. Hannibal awoke his men early on the day he planned to initiate the battle, had them warm themselves by the fire, eat a hearty breakfast, and then coat their bodies with oil to protect them from the cold winter air.⁶⁰

Early in the morning Hannibal sent some of his Numidian cavalry to harass the Roman camp and entice them to battle. Tiberius was so incensed by the raids, he quickly responded by rousing his camp and mobilizing the entire Roman army before they even had a chance to eat breakfast. They formed up and methodically began to move across the icy cold Trebia River to fight the Carthaginians on the other side. The river, swollen from recent storms, was chest deep in most places, chilling the legionaries to the bone. Hunger added to their fatigue.

In the van of his force, Hannibal posted the Baliares and the light-armed foot, about 8,000 strong; supporting them were the heavier infantry—the flower of his troops. On the wings were 10,000 mounted troops, with the elephants beyond them—half on the right, half on the left. Sempronius posted his cavalry on the flanks of his infantry—having recalled them for the purpose; for in their disorderly chase after the Numidian raiding-party they had received an unexpected check from a sudden rally of the enemy. The total Roman strength at the beginning of this battle was 18,000 legionaries, 20,000 allied troops of the Latin name, and certain contingents provided by the Cenomani, the only Gallic nation to remain loyal.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 80-82.

⁶¹ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 81.

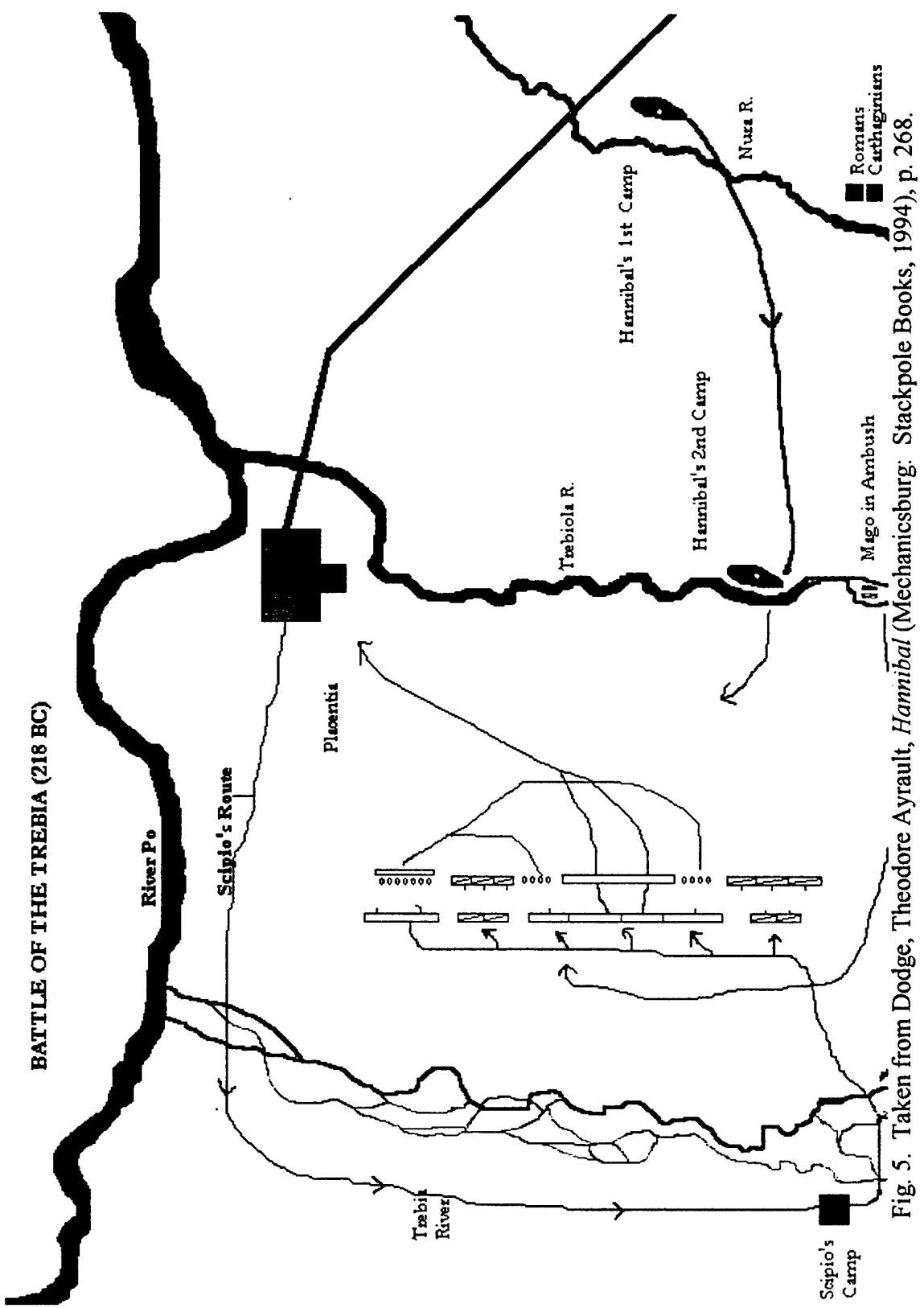


Fig. 5. Taken from Dodge, Theodore Ayrault, *Hannibal* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 1994), p. 268.

Hannibal opened the battle with the Balaure slingers showering javelins and stones down upon the Roman infantry, but the slingers were soon driven from the center to the wings of the Carthaginian formation. The cavalry on both sides was engaged, with the advantage going to the Carthaginians because of the elephants. "The elephants, too, on the extreme wings caused wide-spread confusion, as the horses were terrified by the sight and smell of these strange beasts they had never seen before."⁶² The Roman infantry, though exhausted and fatigued from crossing the icy river, were holding their own against the Carthaginian center until the Balaures began hitting them on the flanks. Suddenly, Mago and his two thousand warriors came out from their protective cover and attacked the rear of the legions. In this dire situation, with men dying on every side, 10,000 legionaries remained firm in the center, cutting their way through the African center of Hannibal's line, which was reinforced with inferior Gallic soldiers. These brave soldiers fought their way back to camp, then, under the leadership of Cornelius, left that area and retreated to Cremora. Hannibal had decisively defeated two consular armies of the Romans.⁶³

Tiberius sent word to Rome of yet another defeat, but claimed the "badness of the season had robbed him of the victory."⁶⁴ When the truth reached Rome--that she had suffered yet another humiliating defeat by the Carthaginians--panic struck at the heart of every citizen, expecting Hannibal to show up at the gates of Rome, itself, at any time. They wondered what could be done to stop the advance of the Carthaginians. Tiberius

⁶² Ibid., 81-82.

⁶³ Ibid., 82-83.

⁶⁴ Polybius, *General History*, 185-186.

eventually returned to Rome to preside over the new consular elections. Two new consuls were elected--Gnaeus Servilius and Gaius Flaminius--who immediately began their preparations for war. "Since both existing consular armies had been decimated at Trebia, four new legions were immediately levied--an early sign that the manpower of Italy would prove its greatest asset."⁶⁵ Following the Battle at the River Trebia, some minor skirmishing took place between Hannibal's army and the Romans, but nothing significant occurred until the battle at Lake Trasimene in 217 B.C.

In the days which followed the Battle at the River Trebia, Hannibal courted the friendship and help of the native Gauls. They were to become his manpower reserve, for without their help he could not possibly sustain his army for long in the field. As the years wore on in Italy, these undisciplined and, for the most part, untrained soldiers would constitute the bulk of his army. For, indeed, Cornelius' brother (who, with his army, had remained in Spain) was doing well, and had driven the Carthaginians from the land between the Pyrenees and the Ebro River, thus severing Hannibal's lines of communication. Hence, Hannibal had to rely on replacement soldiers from Italy to sustain his army. These soldiers were fickle at times, and could not always be trusted, giving their loyalty to the conqueror of the day. It was for this reason, perhaps, that Hannibal had several wigs made which were dyed to give the appearance of differing ages. He changed the wigs constantly, dressing to suit the style and color of the wig. Even those who were very familiar with him had a difficult time recognizing him when

⁶⁵ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 85.

he was wearing these disguises.⁶⁶ However, were it not for these allies, he could not have remained in Italy as long as he did.

As winter ended and spring came in 217 B.C., the new consuls were eager to take their armies and crush Hannibal. They separated, with each marching northward from Rome. Servilius traveled east, near the Adriatic side of Italy, and Flaminius went to Arretium, which effectively denied Hannibal direct access to Rome by any of the main roads. Hannibal inquired of the native hosts to discover how he could get to Rome without using the main roads. He was told that if he would "conduct the army over certain marshes, which would lead directly to Tyrrhenia, his march, though difficult indeed, would yet be short, and such also as must fully disappoint the expectation of the enemy. As the difficulty only served to flatter the disposition of this general, he resolved that he would take his route that way."⁶⁷

Hannibal knew the march through these marshes would be difficult, for there were no roads and no known way to escape the water, mud, and disease. However, the advantage to taking this route was that it would put him behind the Roman armies, with a clear path to Rome. To undertake the march he placed his best soldiers, the Africans and Spaniards, in the van. He placed the Gauls behind them, using the cavalry to keep them moving. He kept his baggage interspersed throughout the formation. Hannibal stayed towards the front, riding an elephant (the only one left alive), as his army slogged through the marshes. The march was exhausting, as every step required great strength to extricate the feet from deep mud. Many soldiers (mostly Gauls, who were not as conditioned to

⁶⁶ Ibid., 87.

⁶⁷ Polybius, *General History*, 188.

travail as Hannibal's Africans and Spaniards were) and baggage horses died along the way. The only dry places for sleeping or resting to be found in these circumstances were upon the corpses of those who had died. Hannibal, in addition, suffered throughout the ordeal from a disease in his eyes. There was not time for him to rest and search for a cure (even if one had been available), so he was ultimately deprived of sight in one eye.⁶⁸

The tactical advantage of the march proved successful, for when the Carthaginians emerged from the marshes, the central plains of Italy were open to them. The Gauls, who wanted pillage and plunder, soon went to work in the countryside, taking whatever they pleased. The Consul Flaminius, was outraged by this conduct and determined to attack Hannibal, against the advice of his officers, who thought he should wait for Servilius before attempting such a venture on his own. "Flaminius, provoked beyond all patience, and dreading the reproaches of the multitude, would run with haste to revenge the insult . . . with the hope of finishing the war alone, before his colleague could arrive; and, in a word, that he would thus afford to his enemies the opportunities that were desired, of attacking him with some advantage."⁶⁹ Hannibal, meanwhile, moved his army to a position where he knew the Roman army of Flaminius would eventually come--Lake Trasimene.

Hannibal reconnoitered the ground, then positioned his forces in the hills above Lake Trasimene, and waited for the Roman army of Flaminius to come. He placed his cavalry in the hills at the approach to Lake Trasimene (they would seal in the Romans once the fight began); the Gauls along his center, in the hills; and his veteran African and

⁶⁸ Ibid., 189.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 189.

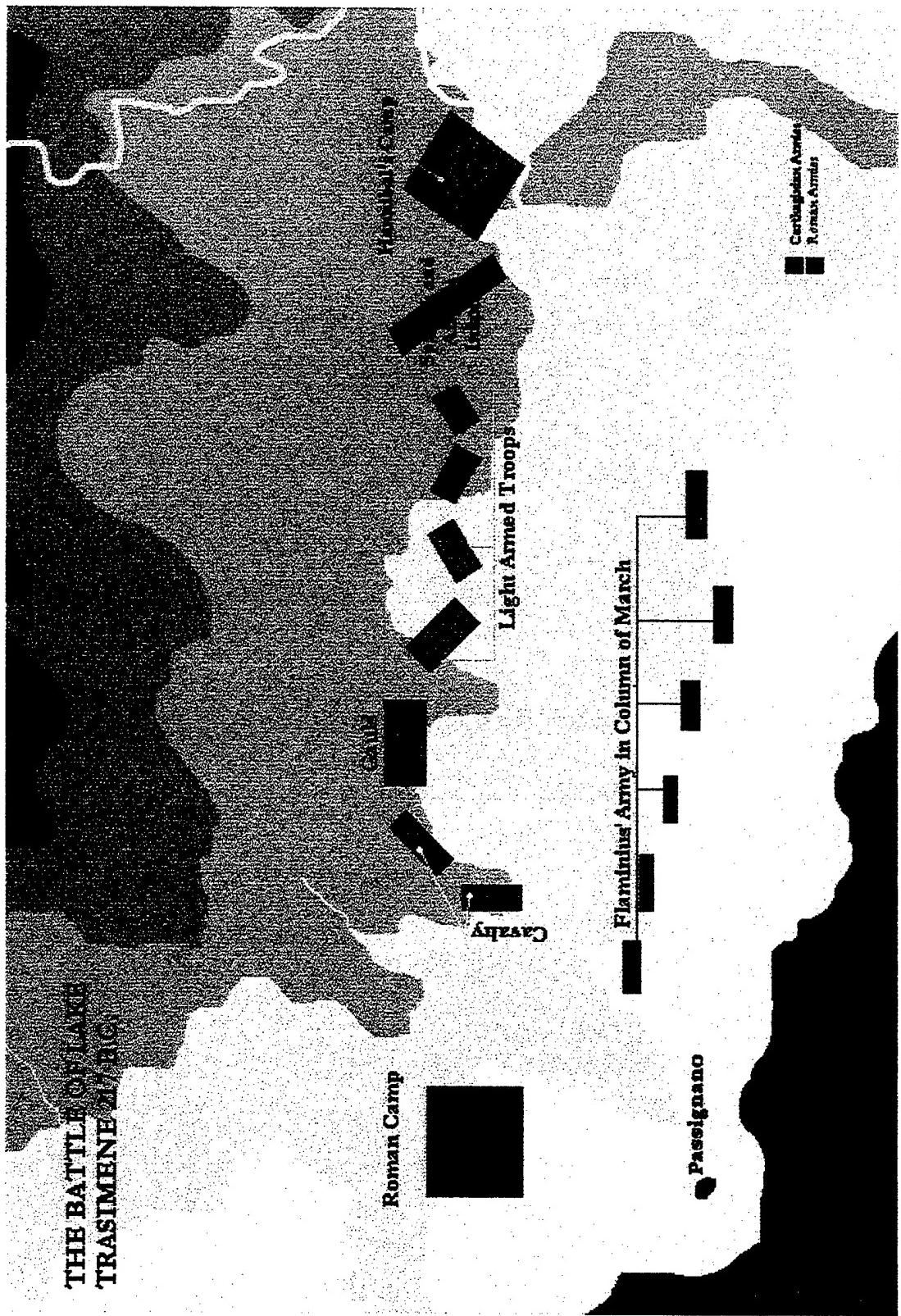


Fig. 6. Taken from Bradford Ermle, *Hannibal* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), p. 107.

Spanish infantry at the other end of his line, to seal the Romans' vanguard. The Battle of Lake Trasimene would go down as one of the largest ambushes in history, as Flaminius commanded over 40,000 soldiers.

On the twenty-first of June, the Roman army left its camp near Cortona, and proceeded down the highway towards Trasimene. A heavy morning mist covered the ground as they approached the lake, shrouding the hills to their left. As the infantry moved along they were suddenly struck with missiles, darts, stones, and javelins, but could not see from whence they came. "In such a fog, their ears served them better than their eyes, and they heard the groaning of the wounded with screams and shouts that made them peer first one way and then another."⁷⁰ As Roman cohorts struggled to get into line, suddenly, the hills on their left shook with thunder as a thousand Gauls attacked the ranks of the legionaries. "While they tried to think what to do they were slain without realizing how."⁷¹

Many of the legionaries tried to escape by throwing themselves into the lake, but the cavalry pursued and slaughtered them as they tried to swim away.⁷² Some of the vanguard of the Roman infantry fought their way through the rear of the ambush. As they reached the tops of the hills and looked down on Lake Trasimene, with the sun now burning bright and the fog dissipated, they beheld the remnants of their army being annihilated. Flaminius is believed to have been slain by the Gauls as payback for his

⁷⁰ Lamb, *Hannibal*, 116.

⁷¹ Ibid., 116.

⁷² Ibid., 117.

conquest of their tribes years earlier, in their homeland.⁷³ The legionaries who had escaped the initial slaughter were eventually surrounded and captured by Hannibal's cavalry. More than 15,000 were taken prisoner. The once proud Roman army of Flaminius ceased to exist, obliterated on the field of battle. Hannibal made a search for the body of Flaminius, but it could not be found--probably stripped of its uniform by trophy hunters. Hannibal's armies, still weary from their march through the swamps, and with 2,500 killed or wounded, took a well-deserved rest.

The Romans' defeat at Trasimene was very difficult for the Roman people to handle, just as the defeat at the River Trebia had been. Never before had the Romans suffered defeat on the field so decisively, time after time, by such a determined foe. The senate was desperate to unite their country and defeat Hannibal. So, for the first time in Roman history, the people elected a dictator by popular vote.⁷⁴ (This indicates the extent of their desperation.) This dictator would assume command of all the Roman military. His name was Quintus Fabius Maximus and was termed as Cunctator, "the Delayer," and as Maximus, meaning "the Great." His assistant (master of the horse) was Marcus Minucius Rufus. What we know, today, as "Fabian tactics" originated with Fabius. He shadowed Hannibal and followed his movements but would not bring him to direct battle. Wherever Hannibal went, he went, but he did not engage Hannibal until he felt the odds were overwhelmingly in his favor.

Meanwhile, right before the eyes of Fabius' Roman army, Hannibal ransacked the country, hoping to provoke the Romans into battle. Fabius was not yet ready, and,

⁷³ Ibid., 116.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 123.

though he followed Hannibal at a close distance, was careful not to be drawn into battle. After a time, the outcry became so great that Fabius' own soldiers thought he was a coward, afraid to fight Hannibal. One of the most outspoken on the topic was his master of the horse, Minucius, who not only criticized Fabius for inactivity, but constantly urged him to bring Hannibal to battle: “Are we here,’ he cried, ‘merely to enjoy the pleasant spectacle of our friends being butchered and their houses burned? Are we not ashamed, if for none else, at least for these citizens of ours, whom Romans of old sent out as settlers to guard this frontier from Samnite aggression? It is not by their neighbours, the Samnites, that the flames are kindled now, but by a foreigner from Carthage, whom our own procrastination and inertia have allowed to come here from the ends of the world!”⁷⁵

Hannibal swept through southwest Italy, moving towards the Mediterranean coastline, hoping to secure ports from which to receive supplies from Carthage. He fed the fuels of controversy against Fabius by destroying all the lands and homes where Fabius lived, except Fabius' own. Those of weak character suggested Fabius had bought Hannibal off. Fabius remained undaunted and continued his delaying tactics with Hannibal, in spite of the criticism against him. This led to a superb opportunity to destroy Hannibal.⁷⁶

As Hannibal moved his army through the plain of Capua, he destroyed everything in his path. The pass which Hannibal used to enter the plain (the same one he would have to use to return for winter quarters) was taken by Fabius, who placed four thousand

⁷⁵ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 109.

⁷⁶ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 97.

men to guard the pass. Fabius kept the rest of his army along the ridgeline, in close support of the men protecting the pass. When Hannibal returned to the pass and realized his predicament, he told Hasdrubal to gather sticks and tie them to the horns of some cattle. This was accomplished and when night came Hannibal had the sticks set on fire and used his pikemen to drive them to a position above the pass.

When the Romans guarding the pass saw the host of torches moving towards the opposite ridgeline from where their army was positioned, they believed the Carthaginians were attempting to outflank their positions. They immediately left their positions to attack what they believed was the main element of the Carthaginian army. With the Romans chasing cattle in the darkness, Hannibal quickly moved his army through the pass, unopposed by the Romans. Hannibal believed the cautious nature of Fabius would prevail and that he would not engage the Carthaginian army in the darkness. In this assumption he was correct. Though Fabius could see the torches from his position on the heights surrounding the valley, he would not commit his legions to fight in the dark without knowing the disposition or intent of the enemy. “Fabius was aware of these alarms, but continued none the less to keep his men within their fortifications, partly because he feared a trap, [and] partly because he wished especially to avoid a battle by night.”⁷⁷ Hannibal’s cool head, ingenuity, bold, daring leadership, and knowledge of not only his enemy, but also of the capacity of his own soldiers saved his army from almost certain destruction from their enemy. It was Hannibal’s knack for turning a bad situation into a good one that sustained his army for so many years in Italy.

⁷⁷ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 114.

In 216 B.C., after the term of Fabius had ended, the senate elected two new consuls--Lucius Aemilius Paulus and Gaius Terentius Varro. These two consuls were appointed to lead an army of 90,000 soldiers (a composite of eight legions), the largest army Rome had ever put into the field. The Romans were eager to fight Hannibal again and felt that if the legions could meet him on equal ground (Trebia and Trasimene, they dismissed as flukes or trickery used by Hannibal), they could defeat him. By now, Rome believed they knew all of Hannibal's tactics. Many of Rome's senators resigned their posts to march with this "super" army. Hopes were high, and all of Rome talked of the booty they would gain after defeating the Carthaginian army. Raising the number of men required to fill the legions required many new recruits. It is estimated that new recruits made up half the army's strength. The chief disadvantage of new recruits is lack of experience in combat.⁷⁸

Meanwhile, as the Romans assembled their mighty army, Hannibal moved his soldiers from their winter quarters at Geronium to a new location, near the river Aufidus, called Cannae. The town of Cannae was of military significance to the Romans because they replenished the grain supplies for their armies there. By seizing the granary at Cannae, Hannibal brought the Roman army to him. The terrain around Cannae was open and flat for the most part and, from Hannibal's perspective, favored cavalry action--his strongest suit. From the Roman perspective, the flat ground favored infantry action, in that the weight of the legions could punch a hole right through Hannibal's lines. The Aufidus River provided the Carthaginian camp and the Roman camps with water. The Romans established two camps--a small one and a large one. The small Roman camp

⁷⁸ Lamb, *Hannibal*, 133-134.

was established on the opposite side of the Aufidus River from the Carthaginian camp and provided water for the main Roman camp.

As stated previously, Hannibal used his Numidian cavalry to harass the Roman watering parties and on the third day the two armies faced each other. This act sparked Varro's indignation and, on the following day (3 August 216 B.C.), when Varro was in command he moved the army to the west side of the river (the side of the river where the small Roman camp lay). As the Romans marched out, line after line, about 70,000 to 75,000 strong (10,000 were left in the main camp), it was an impressive sight to see.⁷⁹

The Consul Ameilius (who did not favor fighting Hannibal in the plain, but preferred the nearby hills, where the ground was more broken and, therefore, put the enemy at a disadvantage for use of cavalry), commanded the Roman heavy cavalry on the right flank of the legions. The consul Varro commanded the allied cavalry on the left flank of the legions. A former consul, Servilius, commanded the Roman center, or the legions. "In the centre were the legions, line upon line of them: 'the maniples closer together than was formerly the usage and making the depth of each many times exceed its front.' It was hoped that, as on many another battlefield, the armoured weight of the disciplined legionaries would punch a hole clean through Hannibal's centre."⁸⁰ The Romans fielded approximately 75,000 infantry and 6,000 cavalry. After the Romans had formed up their battle lines the wind was blowing dust in their faces and the sun was shining in their eyes.

⁷⁹ Polybius, *General History*, 214.

⁸⁰ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 113.

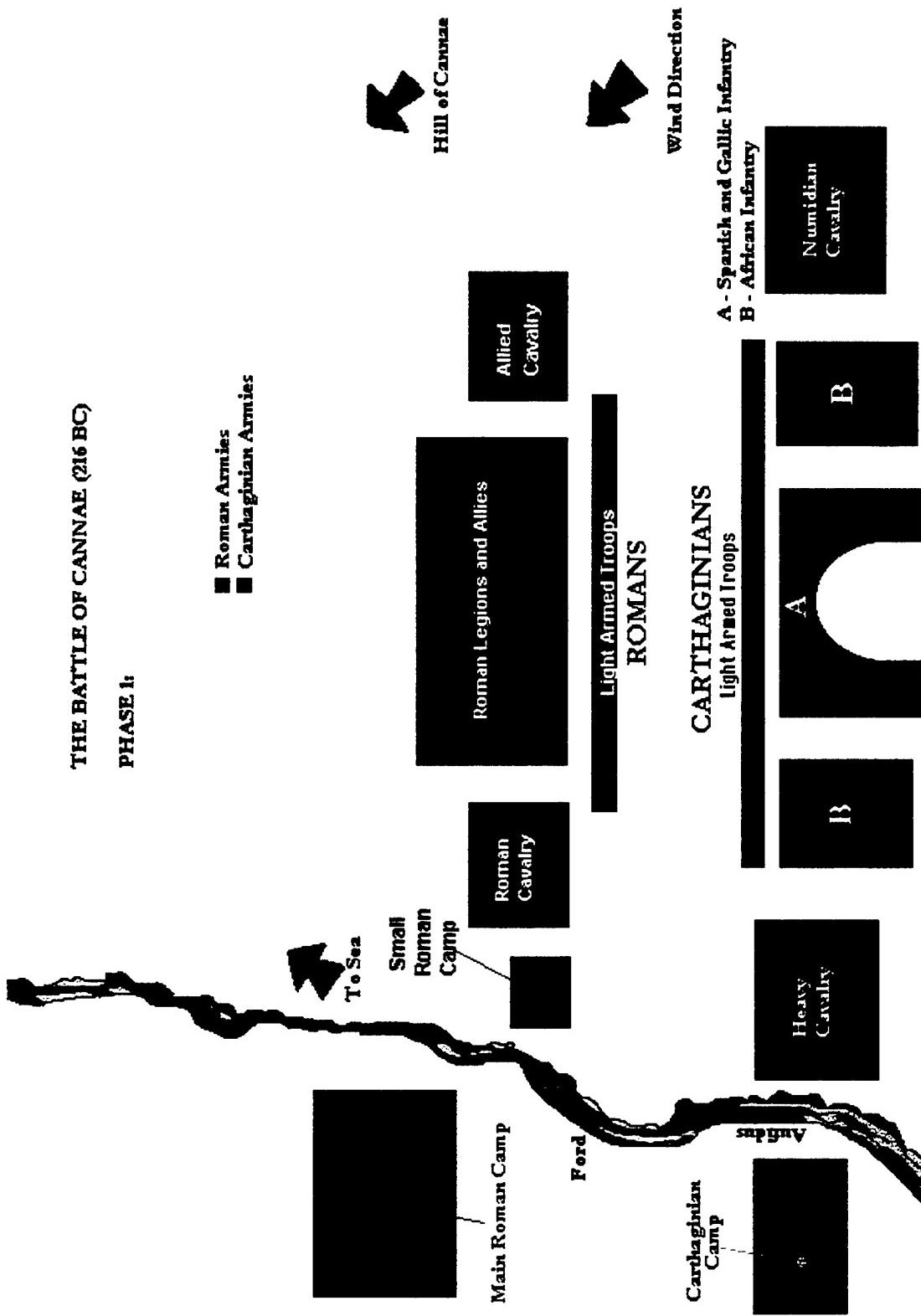


Fig. 7. Taken from Bradford, Ernie, *Hannibal* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), p. 106.

Hannibal drew up his army to face the Roman legion, with 40,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry. Hannibal's disposition of his army was as follows: he and his brother, Mago, commanded the center of his line, or the bulk of his troops, composed of the Gauls and the Spaniards. On the left flank, he placed his heavy cavalry to face the right flank of the Roman heavy cavalry. On his right flank, he placed the Numidian cavalry, who would oppose the left flank of the Roman allied cavalry. The great cavalry commander, Maharbal, commanded the Numidians. Hasdrubal, his chief of staff, commanded the African infantry on Hannibal's left flank, and Hanno commanded the African infantry on his right flank. His pikemen and Balaire slingers formed a line in front of the infantry.⁸¹

As the armies made final preparations for the battle and began to move, the center of Hannibal's line was drawn forward, making a slight bulge, or salient, forward of the African infantry, who remained steadfast on the flanks. At the proper moment, with a signal from Hannibal, his skirmishers moved forward to attack the center of the Roman line, while, simultaneously, the heavy and light cavalry of the Carthaginians attacked the Roman right and left wings of cavalry. Swift and lethal was the combat, with the Roman heavy cavalry sandwiched between the river. The combatants soon dismounted and fought as infantry. The Numidians attacked the allied cavalry with equal vigor, "using the free scope of the ground beyond them to avoid any head-on clash but wheeling about and attacking their enemy in shifts and dips and glides like birds of prey."⁸²

As the cavalry actions were being fought on the flanks, both armies' infantry went into action in the center. Now, the Romans had a definite advantage, and the crescent-

⁸¹ Ibid., 112-113.

⁸² Ibid., 114.

shaped line or salient, formed by the Gauls and the Spaniards before the action, began to be pushed back by the sheer power of the legions. One can only imagine the personal contact involved in this kind of combat: hacking, thrusting, slashing, battling eye to eye, yelling, screaming, and dying, as thousands fell in the midst of combat. The legions began to invert the crescent formed by the Spaniards and Gauls until “they had penetrated so far that the African infantry on the wings projected on either side like banks enclosing a moving river of armour.”⁸³ It looked as though the Roman infantry would break the center of Hannibal’s line. At this critical moment of the battle, Hannibal introduced a most remarkable tactic to thwart the Roman advance: “A trumpet sounded. The moment had arrived. Hannibal’s tactic of double envelopment of the Roman legions was complete. The African troops, heavily armed, disciplined and fresh, made their move: ‘those on the right wing, facing to the left, and those on the left wing, facing to the right.’ Upon the struggling mass of Romans, now caught in the centre, the Africans moved in like the two sides of an enfolding vice.”⁸⁴

As the battle raged in the center, Hannibal’s heavy cavalry defeated the Roman’s heavy cavalry, driving the survivors from the field. With this task completed, the heavy cavalry turned its attention to the allied cavalry and helped the Numidians destroy it. Then both the heavy and light combined arms and attacked the rear of the Roman legions. “Encircled, since the Spaniards and Gauls who had formed Hannibal’s centre still fought on ferociously, contesting every foot of ground, the Romans were totally stricken by the

⁸³ Ibid., 115.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 115.

THE BATTLE OF CANNAE
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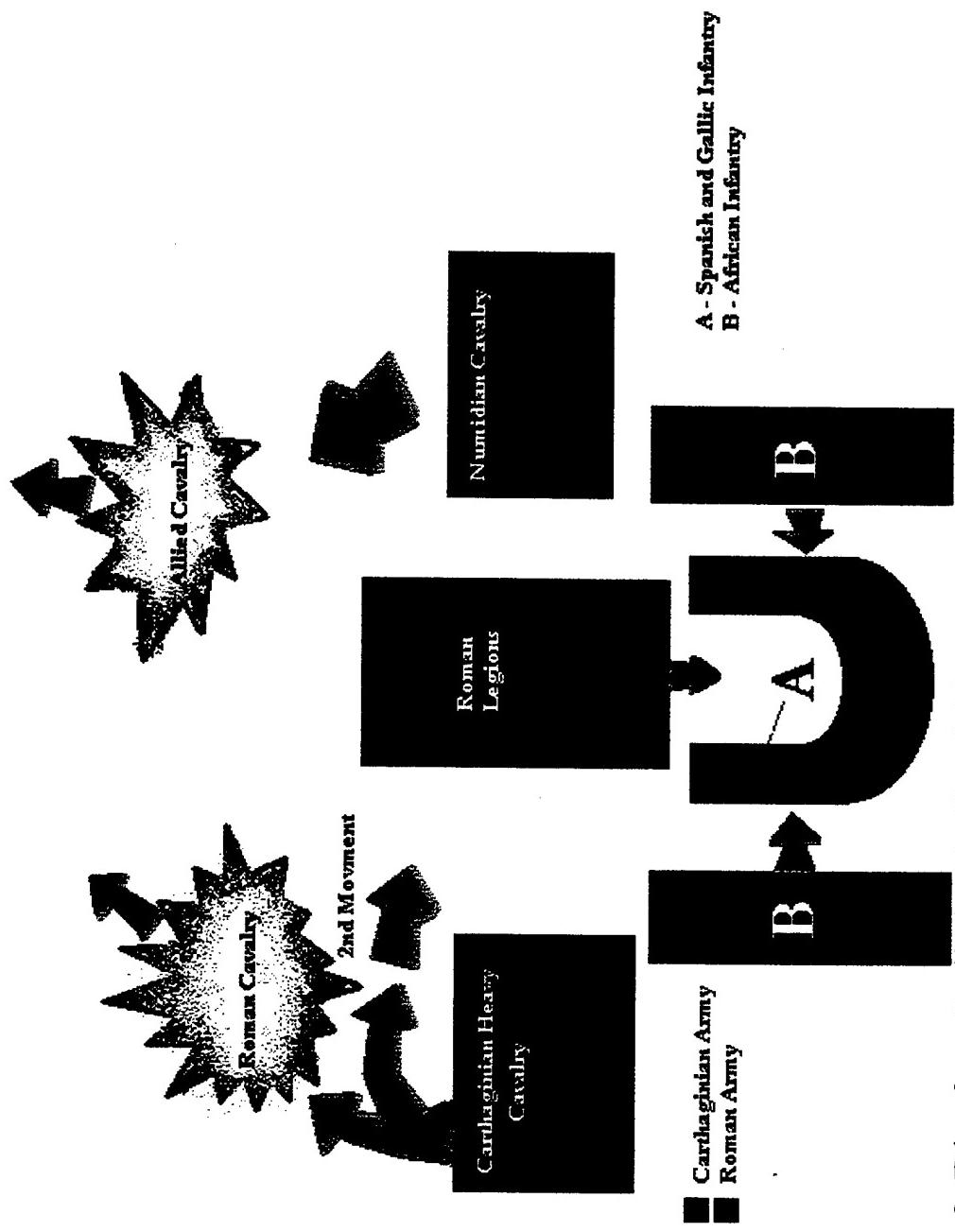


Fig. 8. Taken from Bradford, Ernle, *Hannibal* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), p. 106.

closing in on them of the two wings formed by the Africans. Throughout that hot afternoon the plain below the hill of Cannae became a slaughter yard.”⁸⁵

Casualties vary according to the historian, but Polybius (considered the most accurate) states that Consul Varro escaped with no more than seventy cavalry. Consul Aemilius and two former consuls, Servilius and Atilius, were killed and the master of the horse, Minucius, who had served with Fabius, was killed. Eighty former senators and twenty-nine tribunes also died at Cannae. Over 70,000 Roman infantry were killed and almost all of the 6,000 cavalry. Ten thousand Romans (left at the base camp) were taken prisoner. An estimated 3,000 to 5,000 Roman soldiers escaped to local towns or provinces, among them a young tribune named Scipio (later known as Africanus), who grew to understand Hannibal’s tactics and successfully used that knowledge against him at the Battle of Zama. Hannibal’s losses at Cannae were approximately 4,000 Gauls, 1,500 Spaniards and Africans, and 200 cavalry.⁸⁶ The following description gives us a clear, vivid picture of what combat was really like in those days:

Here and there wounded men, covered with blood, who had been roused to consciousness by the morning cold, were dispatched by a quick blow as they struggled to rise from amongst the corpses; others were found still alive with the sinews in their thighs and behind their knees sliced through, baring their throats and necks and begging who would to spill what little blood they had left. Some had their heads buried in the ground, having apparently dug themselves holes and by smothering their faces with earth had choked themselves to death. Most strange of all was a Numidian soldier, still living, and lying, with nose and ears horribly lacerated, underneath the body of a Roman who, when his useless hands had no longer been able to grasp his sword, had died in the act of tearing his enemy, in bestial fury, with his teeth.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Ibid., 115.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 115; Polybius, *General History*, 217.

⁸⁷ Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 151-152.

THE BATTLE OF CANNAE

PHASE 3:

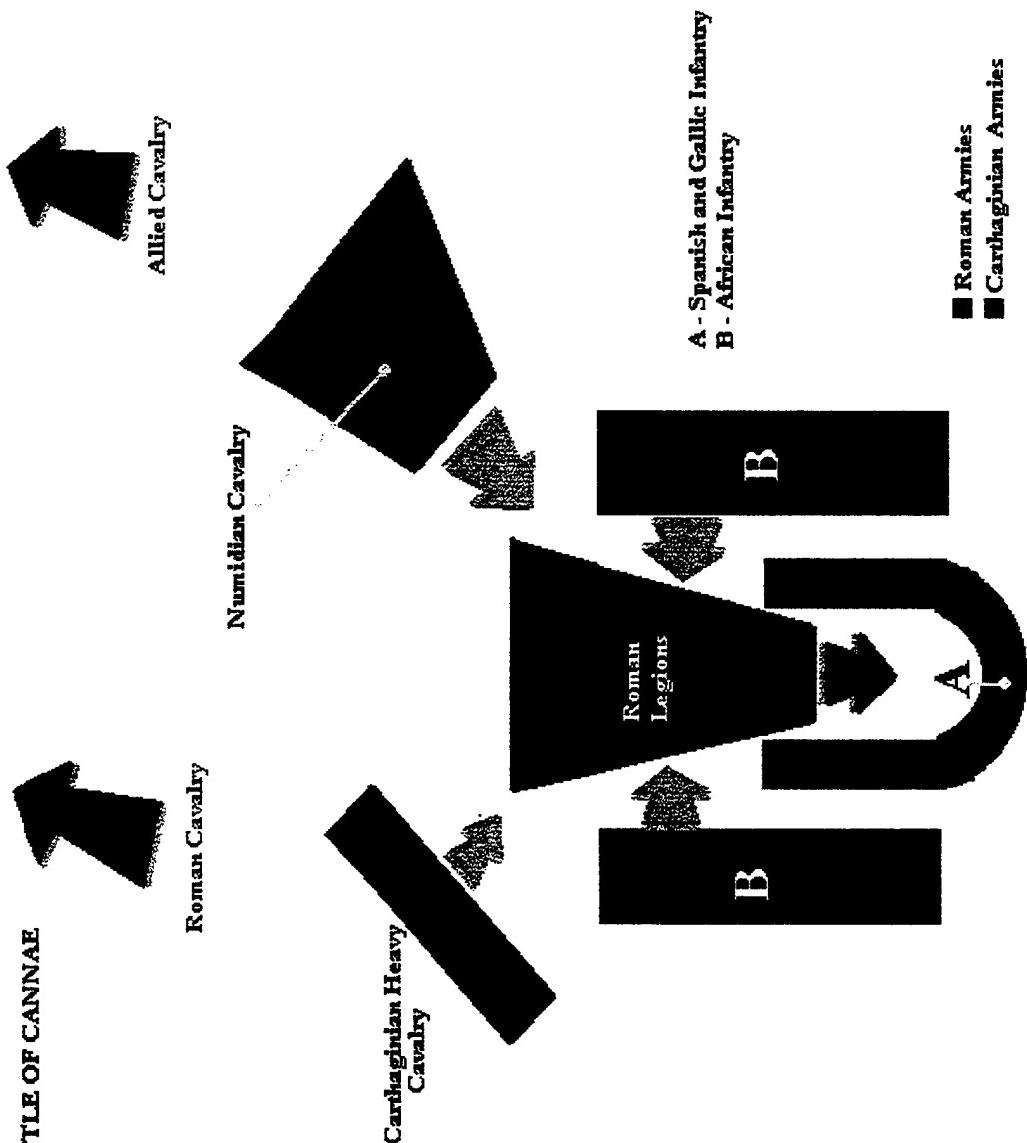


Fig. 9. Taken from Bradford, Ernle, *Hannibal* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), p. 106.

Truly, the battle of Cannae was the high point of Hannibal's campaign and success in Italy. For the Romans, it was the worst military defeat in their history. "No other nation in the world could have suffered so tremendous a series of disasters, and not been overwhelmed."⁸⁸ Immediately after the battle, Hannibal's great cavalry commander, Maharbal, urged Hannibal to follow up on this great victory by attacking Rome. Rome was now defenseless except for the garrison that manned her walls and there was no Roman army in the immediate vicinity with which to challenge the Carthaginians. Hannibal may have made a strategic error--he decided not to go to Rome just then, but, instead, to let his army rest while he decided what his next strategy would be. Maharbal, frustrated at Hannibal's reluctance to exploit his victory, said, "'No man has been blessed with all God's gifts. You know, Hannibal, how to win a fight; you do not know how to use your victory.' It is generally believed that that day's delay was the salvation of the City and of the Empire."⁸⁹

The impacts of the Battle of Cannae were many and great. Several of the Roman allies joined the Carthaginian cause, including the Calatini, the Hirpini, the Brutii, the Atellani, the Lucanians, the Uzentini, most of the Samnites, some of the Apulians, nearly all the Greek settlements on the coast, and all of the Gauls on the Italian side of the Alps.⁹⁰ The city of Rome, knowing it was in great peril, immediately levied new conscripts, taking men as young as seventeen into the army. They even forced as many as 8,000 slaves into the army. Any men who had prior experience were called into the

⁸⁸ Ibid., 154-155.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 151.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 165.

service to defend the city. Even in their greatest peril, there was never talk of surrendering or even negotiating with Hannibal for peace. This would become one of the hallmarks of the Roman Empire—the tenacity to go on even under the most trying of circumstances.⁹¹

Some historians believe Hannibal rode to the very gates of Rome shortly after the Battle of Cannae, but was dissuaded from attacking because the city walls were high and well defended, and he had no siege equipment with which to scale her walls. He also knew that the Romans did have legions in the field (such as the army in Spain, under Scipio) which could have been recalled to defend Italy and lift the siege of the city. Weighing all of the circumstances, Hannibal must have realized it would have been extremely difficult--even impossible--to conduct a long siege of Rome. So, he chose, instead, to isolate the city, and then attempted to win the support of Rome's allies. He hoped this strategy would ultimately result in her capitulation. He was only partially successful in this attempt, however, because the core Latin states never did leave Rome, and thus she was able to hang on and ultimately outlast Hannibal.

At this point, it must be reiterated that the purpose of this paper is not to write a complete historical account of the life of Hannibal. Its purpose is to provide enough examples from his life to illustrate his leadership characteristics and abilities and determine if they contributed to his success on the battlefield, and then determine if those characteristics still hold relevance for leaders today. It is necessary to draw some conclusions from his campaigns in Italy and from the Battle of Zama where the Romans finally, decisively defeated Hannibal.

⁹¹ Ibid., 165.

Following the Battle of Cannae, Hannibal fought the Romans on the Italian Peninsula for another ten years, winning some victories, but losing a few smaller battles. The essential point is: while Hannibal was never able to completely ruin the Romans, the Romans were never able, in Italy, to decisively defeat Hannibal in the field. When Hannibal finally withdrew from the peninsula it only was because Carthage had recalled him to defend the homeland. The only way the Romans could make him leave Italy was by threatening his own country with invasion. Spain had succumbed to the Romans; Carthage was next in line. While it is unlikely he would ever have been able to defeat Rome (even if he had not been recalled), it is still a remarkable feat that he survived in a hostile country as long as he did. If he had received more support from his country early on, when the passes of the Alps were still open, the result may have been very different.

Toward the end of Hannibal's campaign in Italy, he was entirely on the defensive. He no longer possessed an army which could conduct offensive operations. He was surrounded on every side, with no less than four legions assigned to destroy him, while he possessed an army only half the size of the Roman's. By this time, his army was of poor quality. Over the years most of his battle-trained veterans had been buried all across the fields of Rome. There are no records which show how many veterans he had at the end of his campaign, but it must be remembered that Carthage did not provide Hannibal with reinforcements. Therefore, his replacements came from the ranks of the disgruntled allies of Rome, and they were not even close to the same quality as the soldiers they replaced. Even with all this, he managed to hold on for a long time. Even at his weakest point (prior to returning to Carthage), the Romans seemed very reluctant to challenge him or to engage him in one last finishing battle on their soil. "He was left absolutely to his

own resources. And yet,--it is so wonderful that one cannot but repeat it again and again,--though there were around him several armies of Roman veteran legions, for nearly all Romans were veterans now, such was the majesty which hedged his name, that neither one of the opposing commanders, nor all together, dared to come to the final conflict with him.”⁹²

Even Livy, who was clearly biased in favor of the Romans, said of Hannibal’s abilities at the end: “The Romans did not provoke him while he remained quiet, such power did they consider that single general possessed, though everything else around him was falling into ruin.”⁹³

The Battle of Zama, fought in 202 B.C., ended the Second Punic War and, with it, Hannibal’s desire to reclaim the glory that had once belonged to Carthage. When Hannibal left Italy, he had approximately 24,000 soldiers with him. They arrived safely in Africa and wintered at Hadrumetum until the end of 203 B.C. In the spring of 202 B.C., Hannibal quickly organized an army, using the remnants of his brother Mago’s army, which was defeated by the proconsul M. Corneilius and the praetor Quintilius with four legions in cisalpine Gaul.⁹⁴ With the addition of new levies, Hannibal raised an army of about 48,000 infantry, but he had few cavalry, only 2,000 Numidian and even less Carthaginian, together totaling nearly 4,000 cavalry. The Numidian leader, Masinissa, had joined sides with the Romans, depriving Hannibal of his strongest arm and reinforcing Scipio’s 2,700 Roman cavalry by another 6,000. Scipio had 34,000

⁹² Dodge, *Hannibal*, 564.

⁹³ Ibid., 563.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 592.

infantry, all veterans, and arguably the best soldiers Rome could field.⁹⁵ This is borne out, to some extent, by what happened when Hannibal sent three spies to gain intelligence on the army of Scipio. The spies were caught and, instead of being executed, were allowed to go back to Hannibal and report everything they had seen. Scipio obviously had great confidence in his army.

Before the beginning of the battle, Hannibal asked to speak with Scipio, hoping to reach a peace settlement. Here, on the plains of Zama, were the two finest commanders of the day, talking to each other with only their interpreters present. Scipio called for the unconditional surrender of Carthage, which Hannibal found totally unacceptable. Hence, the battle commenced. Some historians have speculated on why Hannibal offered peace to the Romans. One reason given is that he knew the quality of his army was very inferior to that of the Romans, particularly with the addition of the Numidian cavalry. Therefore, the risk of battle favored the Romans. A more probable explanation, however, is that Hannibal knew that even if his army defeated the army commanded by Scipio, there were twenty-three more legions in Rome's service scattered throughout the world, which could be brought to bear against them. When would the war end--not until Carthage was totally destroyed! Hannibal may have foreseen the impending doom of his nation even before the start of the Third Punic War. He was trying to preserve what was left of his country. The time to bring Rome to her knees was long passed--since the days of Cannae.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Ibid., 596-597.

⁹⁶ H. H. Scullard, *Scipio Africanus: Soldier and Politician* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), 142-143.

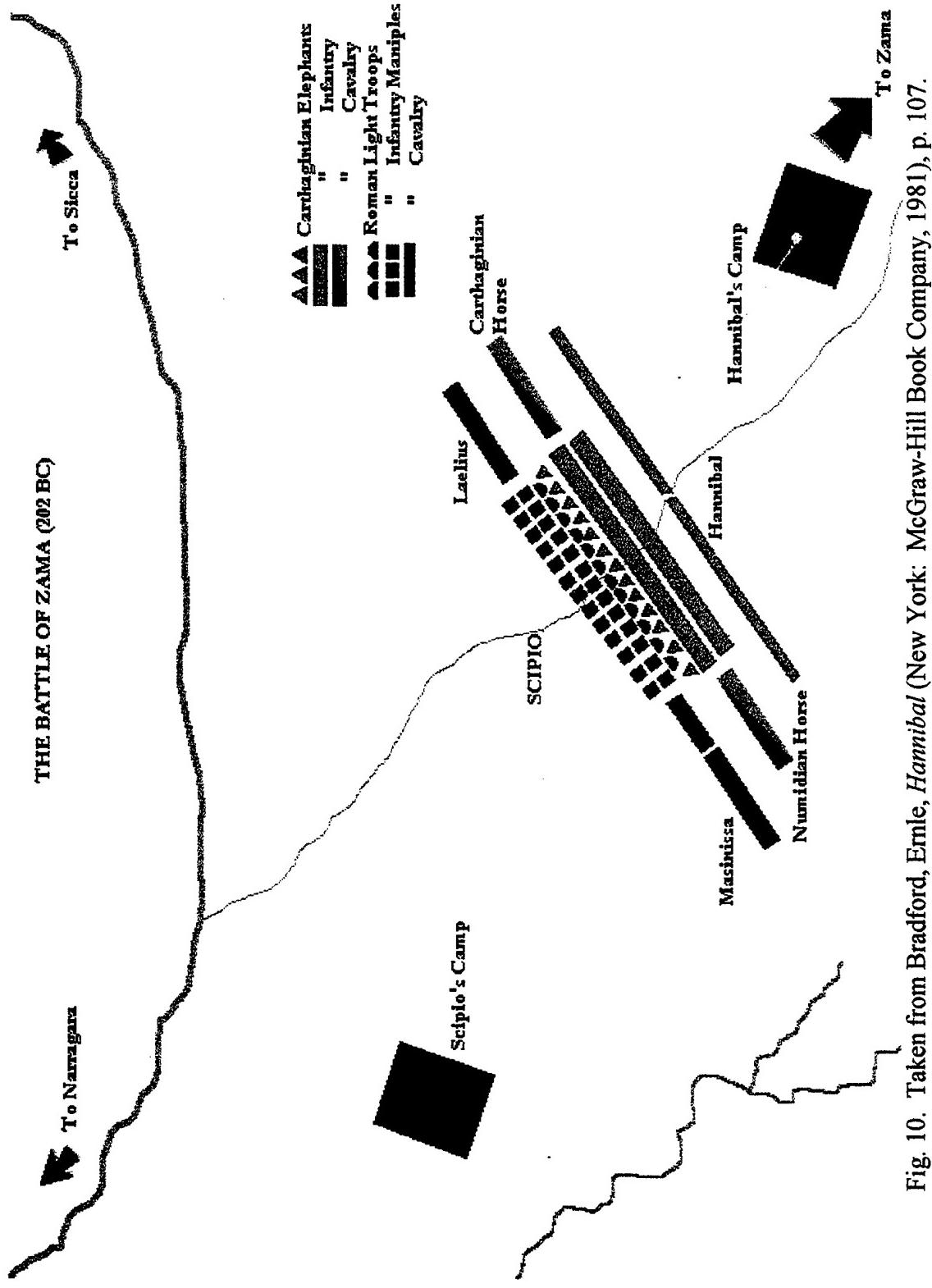


Fig. 10. Taken from Bradford, Emile, *Hannibal* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981), p. 107.

Both sides drew up for battle, Hannibal with three lines of infantry. The first line consisted of 12,000 mercenaries: Ligurians, Celts, Balearic Islanders (Baleares), and Moors--the remnants of Mago's army. To the front of this line were the skirmishers and eighty elephants. His second line consisted of Libyans and Carthaginians. The third line was composed of the Old Guard, the veterans he had brought with him from Rome. The third line really constituted his reserve. On either wing, he placed 2,000 cavalry. One could argue that the cavalry's mission was only to draw the enemy cavalry from the field and leave the contest to the infantry, for they were outnumbered at least two, if not three, to one.⁹⁷

The Romans drew up three lines of infantry, as well, with their cavalry on the flanks. Laelius commanded the wing on the left and Masinissa with all his Numidians commanded the wing on the right. As the cavalry engaged and the skirmishers began to do battle, the trumpets sounded for the charge of the elephants. The trumpets were so loud, however, that some of the elephants charged in the wrong direction, plowing into the Carthaginian ranks. The errant elephants were quickly moved to the flanks of Hannibal's line, with most of the beasts finding their way to the Roman center. Scipio, who had anticipated the use of elephants, had created lanes for them to run through, between his maniples, so that their charge had no effect on his center. They were ushered to the rear of his formation. The first lines of infantry on both sides began to fight, with the more experienced Romans gaining the upper hand. When the second line of Hannibal's infantry did not immediately go to the aid of the first, the disheartened mercenaries turned and began to do combat with them. Thus, Hannibal's second line had

⁹⁷ Ibid., 142-143.

to deal not only with the Roman infantry, but also with their own mercenaries who had turned against them. Even so, they put up a good fight, and Scipio pulled back his first line of infantry to reorganize.

Hannibal could not exploit Scipio's withdrawal because of the disorganization of his own lines, and had to use the time to reorganize his force, as well. Hannibal placed the survivors of the first and second infantry lines on the flanks of his veteran reserve, and the battle soon commenced again. Hannibal's third line was doing well against the Roman infantry when suddenly they were attacked from the rear by the returning Roman and Numidian cavalry. This was the same tactic Hannibal had so often used against the Romans in Italy, and he now faced the same disaster. The Roman cavalry had destroyed the Carthaginian cavalry and returned in time to tip the scales in favor of the Roman infantry. The Carthaginian forces were routed and destroyed. Hannibal left the field to the victor, Scipio. Thus ended the Battle of Zama and, with it, the aspirations of one of the greatest captains to ever live.⁹⁸

After the battle, Scipio met with Hannibal. During their meeting, Scipio asked Hannibal who he thought was the greatest captain. Hannibal answered,

"Alexander, king of Macedonia; because with a small band he defeated armies whose numbers were beyond reckoning; and because he had overrun the remotest regions, the merely visiting of which was a thing above human aspiration." Scipio then asked "to whom he gave the second place?" and he replied, "To Pyrrhus; for he first taught the method of encamping; and, besides, no one ever showed more exquisite judgment in choosing his ground and disposing his posts." . . . In his proceeding to ask "whom he esteemed the third?" Hannibal replied, "Myself, beyond doubt." On this Scipio laughed, and added, "What would you have said if you had conquered me?" "Then," replied the other, "I would have placed Hannibal, not only before Alexander and Pyrrhus, but before all other commanders."⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Ibid., 149-151.

⁹⁹ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 651-652.

CHAPTER 4

HANNIBAL'S LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

Hannibal, as a young general, showed the same bodily strength, enthusiasm and gallantry as Alexander [the Great]. . . . Alexander got larger results from his victories; but this was owing to the conditions under which he wrought. Hannibal could not make his battles decisive; the Roman Republic was like a cyclopean wall. In pursuit and in sieges, the Macedonian was the bolder and greater. Gauged by the work he had to do, the resistance he encountered, and the means at his command, Hannibal outranks any general of history.¹

Dodge, *Hannibal*

This chapter will examine the most important leadership characteristics of Hannibal--those attributes that most directly contributed to his success on the battlefield. These characteristics--**courage, confidence, communication, mental and physical toughness, adaptability, and selflessness**--do not represent all of the leadership traits Hannibal exhibited, but are the most pertinent ones for this study.

First and foremost among these characteristics was Hannibal's **courage**. Courage is an essential element of all good soldiers. As General Matthew B. Ridgeway said, "There are two kinds of courage, physical and moral, and he who would be a true leader must have both. Both are the products of the character-forming process, of the development of self-control, self-discipline, physical endurance, of knowledge of one's job and, therefore, of confidence. These qualities minimize fear and maximize sound judgment under pressure and--with some of that indispensable stuff called luck--often bring success from seemingly hopeless situations."²

¹ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 642.

² FM 22-100, *Army Leadership* (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Command and General Staff College, 1997), 4-4.

Hannibal displayed extraordinary courage, defined as “the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc. with firmness and without fear.”³

Hannibal, cutoff and isolated from his own country, fearlessly fought against the Romans for over a decade in Italy. During his entire campaign, Carthage sent him only a few supplies and scant reinforcements. He was basically on his own and had to forage the land to sustain his soldiers. He obtained reinforcements only by winning the hearts and minds of the indigenous populations to his cause. If he had had any doubt in his own abilities or shown a lack of courage during the Italian campaign, the Romans would have had a quick and decisive victory.

As noted earlier, Hannibal’s march from Saguntum (in Spain) towards Rome began with an army of over 100,000 men. By the time he had battled his way through the Alps and emerged in Italy, he had less than 30,000 men, and they were in very poor physical condition. At this point, if his courage had wavered, he could have abandoned his desire to crush Rome and found another way by land or sea to retreat and return to Spain. And there would have been no cause for him to feel shame in doing so, for he had accomplished the greatest march in military history (with elephants) and against all odds for success. Yet, marching through the Alps during winter and through hostile native tribes was only the beginning of his feats. He courageously persisted with his objectives, pushing on against the greatest odds--battling and defeating the finest armies Rome could field against him for almost fourteen years. His courage was equal to his intelligence, the importance of which Napoleon stressed in his maxims: “It is rare and

³ *Random House College Dictionary*, (New York: Random House, Inc., 1980), revised ed., 308.

difficult to find in one man all the qualities necessary to a great general. That which is most desirable and which immediately sets a man apart is that his intelligence or talent be in equilibrium with his character or courage. If his courage is superior, a general heedlessly undertakes things beyond his conception; while, on the contrary, if his character or courage is inferior to his intelligence, he does not dare carry out his conceptions.”⁴

“To remove doubt and reduce anxiety in combat, the soldier must first have confidence in his own professional ability.”⁵ Hannibal had a great deal of self-confidence; it exuded itself in all his actions. To have less than he had would have spelled disaster on the Italian Peninsula, to say nothing of the Alps, the marshes of Arnus, or the Roman legions at Cannae. Confidence is defined as “full trust; belief in the reliability of a person or thing . . . self-reliance, assurance, or boldness: *He acted immediately with admirable and justifiable confidence.*”⁶

On the other hand, lack of self-confidence on the part of a leader can have disastrous consequences on the outcome of a battle. An example of this was shown by Hannibal’s younger brother Hasdrubal in the year 207 B.C. when he broke through the Roman line in Spain, defeated the Roman armies there, and then crossed the Alps intending to reinforce Hannibal’s weakened army in southern Italy. The Romans learned of Hasdrubal’s approach through the Alps, and positioned several armies to meet him as he descended into Italy in much the same way Hannibal had done years earlier.

⁴ C-610, *The Evolution of Modern Warfare—Term I Syllabus/Book of Readings* (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1997), 266.

⁵ FM22-100, *Army Leadership*, 5-5.

⁶ *Random House College Dictionary*, 282.

(However, Hasdrubal did not face the same hardships Hannibal had when he marched his army through the wintry Alps, fighting enemies along the way.) Upon his arrival in Italy, Hasdrubal fought some indecisive engagements with the Romans when he should have tried to link up with his brother in the south as quickly as possible. Delaying Hasdrubal's march south gave the Romans time to concentrate their two consular armies in the north and thereby cut off Hasdrubal's march towards his brother. Hannibal was aware of his brother's situation and tried to move towards him, but was detained by three Roman armies, one of which was led by the consul Nero.

When Nero learned of Hasdrubal's intent to link up with Hannibal in the south, Nero deceived Hannibal by inducing him to believe Nero's army was preparing to do battle against his army. Instead, Nero marched the bulk of his army north to unite with the consular army facing Hasdrubal. He marched his army 270 miles in seven days, a non-stop, twenty-four-hour-a-day march, to unite with the consul Livius. This was one of the greatest infantry marches in Roman history. "Tired infantry was carried in wagons. The entire [Roman] population was devoted to speeding them on their way and lined the roadside in crowds to welcome them, encourage them, and pray the gods for their success. They marched night and day; they ate their rations without stopping. Nothing was allowed to arrest the constant motion of the column."⁷ Nero united with Livius and a third Roman general named Porcius. The three generals held a meeting and decided to attack Hasdrubal without delay for fear Hannibal would learn of Nero's departure and attack their rear lines of communication.

⁷ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 548.

Initially Hasdrubal was unaware of Nero's union with Livius and Porcius and prepared to do battle against what he thought was one consul with two Roman armies. As the day of battle approached, Hasdrubal's forward recon and security elements began to report the appearance of dusty, tired soldiers and horses from yet another consular army. When Hasdrubal learned that Nero had combined forces with Livius and Porcius, he began to lose his nerve and self-confidence. Not knowing whether Nero had evaded his brother or destroyed him, he felt great doubt in his own ability to defeat the enemy which lay before him. Instead of attacking the Roman armies as planned, he had his army retreat in the face of the Roman forces. This action demoralized his troops, and the combined Roman armies fell on them and slaughtered them. Hasdrubal was killed, decapitated, and his head flung to the sentries that protected Hannibal's camp. One historian recounts Hasdrubal's defeat:

It looks as if Hasdrubal was acting from demoralization. The task which Hannibal had performed unruffled for a dozen years, and under vastly more difficult conditions, seems to have overtaxed Hasdrubal at the outset. Hannibal had been alone; Hasdrubal was marching towards a friendly army. Hannibal and he were to be sure, operating on exterior lines and were seriously hampered by the forces interposed between them, which prevented their maneuvering with common purpose. But this does not explain Hasdrubal's sudden retreat. The loss of moral force following such withdrawal was alone enough to forfeit the battle which must ensue...he could not afford to retreat when in presence of the enemy, particularly with his heterogeneous and unreliable forces, with which prestige was everything.⁸

In comparing Hannibal with Hasdrubal, Hannibal never seems to have lost his self-confidence, not even under the most arduous or precarious conditions. At the battle of Cannae, Hannibal was outnumbered two to one, and faced eight legions, the equivalent

⁸ Ibid., 522.

of four consular armies, yet his confidence never waned. He emerged as the victor of the field, destroying nearly 80,000 Romans. Another example took place when the consul Fabius held the mountain passes at Casinginum which closed the exit to Hannibal's escape from the Falernian plain below. Hannibal fastened wood to the horns of oxen, lit the wood on fire, and then drove the frightened beasts towards the Roman line. The Romans mistakenly believed Hannibal was attacking in force and rushed to meet him, while his main army quietly slipped around the Roman defenses in the darkness. Hannibal's self-confidence was indomitable and unbeatable under the most trying of circumstances. He never lost confidence in his own ability to find a way out of a difficult situation or to turn sure defeat into a draw, at the least. Only at Zama, after the Italian campaign, was Hannibal decisively defeated and then only because of the poor quality of his infantry and his lack of cavalry strength.

As mentioned previously, Hannibal possessed excellent **communication** skills. His ability to communicate went beyond merely talking to his soldiers, he also conveyed his thoughts through his actions, which is the most powerful form of communication. As stated in the Random House College Dictionary, communication can occur in several forms, including, "To impart knowledge or make known; to give to another; impart; transmit; . . . to share in or to partake of; to give or interchange thoughts, information, or the like; . . . to have or form a connecting passage."⁹ He possessed the unique ability to transmit his desires and will to his subordinates not only by what he said, but more importantly by what he did.

⁹ *Random House College Dictionary*, 272.

Hannibal and his commanders understood one another. "His . . . commanders were exceptionally brilliant, had worked and fought together on many a battlefield, and knew and respected the quality of their leader. . . . they did not need any orders once action had commenced, for they completely understood one another."¹⁰

Hannibal had to lead his soldiers by example. He led a multilingual army and most likely did not speak all their languages. So he led by his example, many times taking great personal risk in leading his soldiers from the front. This was illustrated when his army was passing through the Alps and the enemy (Gauls) blocked their way from the heights above. He personally led a group of his best soldiers to the heights overlooking the passages which the enemy vacated at night. The next morning, when the natives returned to take their former positions, Hannibal was there to meet them. He led the attack against them and destroyed them.

Hannibal's actions on the battlefield and his personal involvement in the fighting (exposing himself to the same hazards as those facing his soldiers), communicated more about their commander and his philosophy of leadership than words could ever have expressed. These heroic acts instilled in Hannibal's soldiers the belief that their commander possessed the attributes of courage, intelligence, selflessness, and the willingness to take personal risk to protect them. This belief gave his soldiers tremendous trust and confidence--they did the impossible for him time and time again. For the most part, all of them remained very loyal to him throughout his campaigns. This unshakable loyalty to Hannibal was the cement that bonded them to their leader. It helped them endure the extreme hardships they continually faced. Hannibal best typifies

¹⁰ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 109-110.

the kind of leader General Dwight D. Eisenhower talked about when he said the necessary ingredients for a senior leader's success "will be measured more by his ability to lead and persuade than by his adherence to fixed notions of arbitrary command practices."¹¹

Hannibal not only led his soldiers from the front during battle, but endured the same harsh elements his soldiers did. He was not one to pamper himself with luxurious accommodations, but many times was found sleeping on the ground near the sentries, wrapped only in his coat. The fact that he suffered the same privations as his soldiers conveyed that he was always aware of their needs and would do whatever he could to assist them and reduce their suffering. Before the battle at the River Trebia, Hannibal's men (unlike their Roman counterparts) were given the opportunity to eat a hearty breakfast, warm themselves by the fire, and coat their bodies with animal oil to insulate their exposed bodies from the cold. This additional care and concern helped them defeat the Romans on this day.

Another excellent example of his leadership from the front and the communicative effect it had on his subordinates was seen in his march through the Marshes of Arnus (in Italy) to circumvent the Roman armies blocking the main highways to the south. During this march through the marshes, Hannibal contracted a disease that cost him the sight of one of his eyes. Even though he was experiencing great pain and personal discomfort he did not let his personal hardship slow or stop the advance of his forces. Instead, he led his army through the swamps until they reached their objective.¹²

¹¹ FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, 10-8.

¹² Polybius, *General History*, 189.

This march was an incredible feat because of its duration, second only to the march through the Alps, and shows Hannibal's incredible perseverance. He literally pushed his soldiers through the swamps by use of his light cavalry, encouraging his tired soldiers as they plodded through the muddy, disease-infested marsh, straight past the Roman armies on either side. They believed he would never attempt such a feat, but instead would use one of the main highways to reach Rome. By finishing with this march he caught the Romans totally by surprise and achieved total tactical success. The Roman armies were separated from each other by this maneuver and he was able to destroy one of them at Lake Trasimene.¹³

Hannibal exemplified the kind of communication skills stated in FM 22-100, "senior leaders who communicate sincerely are compassionate, trusting, inspirational and thoughtful. They communicate they truly care!"¹⁴ Alden Hatch gave a modern day corollary to Hannibal when he commented on General George S. Patton's leadership style and showed how his command presence (leadership by example) communicated and instilled confidence in his men. This modern day description of how American soldiers felt about their commander captures the essence of how Hannibal's soldiers must have felt about their leader, as well. Hatch says of General Patton: "When they [his men] recognized the stern and lonely figure sitting in the back of the three-stared jeep, the first echelons raised a shout that echoed across the muddy field and rolled on down the line. The sight of their general sent a wave of confidence surging through the whole division,

¹³ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 89.

¹⁴ FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, 10-6.

and as his jeep passed the tanks and half-tracks, the mobile guns and truckloads of soldiers, their wild cheering was for victory already won because they trusted him.¹⁵

This further illustrates the power of a senior leader's presence and of how presence can communicate a leader's "soul" to his soldiers. This presence can translate to success on the battlefield, especially during times of duress. Communication, demonstrated by leadership from the front and by example, was one of Hannibal's greatest leadership attributes.

Hannibal was **mentally and physically tough**, as evidenced by his many accomplishments both on and off the battlefield. Hannibal's strength was shown at an early age. He assumed command of all the Carthaginian armies in his early twenties. His strength as a general began with the siege of Saguntum, and grew from there on his arduous march to the Rhone River and then through the Alps. It was hardened by thirteen years of combat in Italy. Finally, the long sea voyage that took him home (fifteen years after Saguntum) and then fighting the Romans in the final battle at Zama put his mental and physical strength to its greatest test. How many modern day soldiers have had to endure combat for fifteen years and have suffered the hardships and deprivations Hannibal and his army suffered? Hannibal was mentally and physically tough.

Hannibal was a tactical genius, groomed for war, a thoroughbred soldier, schooled from his youth in the art of war by his great mentor, teacher and leader--his father. However, his mental and physical toughness extends beyond the great victories won in the early years of war to the hard times he faced when his army was on the decline and

¹⁵ Ibid., 10-6.

not as effective as a fighting force. This weakness was due to the loss of so many veterans over the years of campaigning on the Italian peninsula. One of the more notable examples of Hannibal's incredible endurance and unconquerable spirit not previously mentioned in this writing was shown in a battle Hannibal fought and decisively won against the Romans in 210 B.C. It was known as the second Battle of Herdonia. In this battle Hannibal destroyed the army of the proconsul Cnaeus Fulvius Centumalus. Hannibal's army was weakened and the Roman armies were attempting to isolate and destroy him, yet he managed to kill over 15,000 Roman infantry and 2,000 of their cavalry--decimating their army. This battle was fought in a year when Rome fielded over twenty-one legions (200,000 men to Hannibal's estimated 40,000 or less). Though not all the legions were committed against Hannibal (some fought against Phillip in Macedonia, and some were with the Scipios in Spain, for example), many of them were. "But the fact always remains marked that, however able his opponent, when Hannibal failed, his army was never seriously damaged; when he won, the enemy was apt to be destroyed."¹⁶ Even when facing these great odds, Hannibal seized the initiative whenever possible and conducted offensive operations against the Romans. Accomplishing this against such overwhelming enemies attests to his strong character.

It is easy to say a leader is successful when his armies are winning on the battlefield. However, when they suffer defeat some may judge them otherwise. Leaders who win on the battlefield and do their jobs according to the norm usually excel, making a name for themselves. However, when victory turns to defeat or mitigating factors and other circumstances prevent total decisive victory, the success of the leader is then

¹⁶ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 500.

questioned. By any standard Hannibal was a successful leader, both in victory and defeat. His real strength of character was seen when the nature of the conflict in Italy forced him to go on the defensive. As the Romans gained strength, he began to lose the cities and colonies which he had gained early in his campaign. He still carried on, however, and did not quit trying to win even though he knew the tide had turned against him.

Some noted American generals have experienced these same kinds of difficulties, although not to the degree Hannibal did, nor, for that matter, for as long as he did. Robert E. Lee is an example. He is considered a great commander and one of the most revered American generals of all time. As we know from Civil War history, Lee was on the defensive during most of the war, and ultimately suffered defeat. But to this day he is known as one of our nation's finest generals. Another example is Napoleon. He is still recognized as a great commander, even though he ultimately suffered defeat in Russia and at Waterloo.

Being on the defensive, losing a battle (or a war, for that matter), does not mean that a leader was unsuccessful. The true character of a leader is tested most during the bad times, when difficulty and adversity are at their worst. When a leader has to switch from the offensive to the defensive, and becomes the oppressed, no longer capable of offensive operations, we find out what a leader is really made of. "As Napoleon said, 'The first quality for a commander in chief is a cool head which receives a just impression of things; he should not allow himself to be confused by either good or bad news . . . in the course of a day . . . there are men who, by their physical and moral make-

up, create for themselves a complete picture from a single detail . . . nature has not marked them for the command of armies and the direction of great operations of war.”¹⁷

Hannibal displayed his greatest strength as a military leader when undergoing terrible adversity towards the end of his campaign in Italy. As the war ground on, his losses mounted and, unlike the Romans who had interior lines and could readily re-supply both material and soldiers from their homeland, Hannibal had no way of replacing his tried, proven combat veterans with quality soldiers. When Carthage did try to send Hannibal reinforcements, (as shown by the example of Hasdrubal), they were either destroyed or otherwise unable to reach Hannibal. Thus, Hannibal was forced to re-supply by what he could plunder from the land.

To clearly illustrate the incredible deprivations endured by Hannibal’s armies during their campaign in a hostile country, a contrast can be made with the advantages enjoyed by General William Tecumseh Sherman during his offensive through Georgia in the Civil War. Would Sherman have been able to sustain his army in the South for fourteen years with no supplies or reinforcements, and if his supply lines had been severed, how long would Sherman have lasted before his offensive stalled out? Sherman had the advantage of superior forces during his attack in the South--he was not outnumbered four to one, as Hannibal had been in Italy. Sherman could reinforce his army as needed through his lines of communication. Hannibal, however, had to replace his veterans with second-rate, inexperienced soldiers (defectors from the colonies of Rome). Sherman, on the other hand, had well-trained regular army Union troops for all of his operations in the South. He faced minimal resistance after the fall of Atlanta, being

¹⁷ C-610, *The Evolution of Modern Warfare*, 265.

superior to the enemy in all aspects of his army. Hannibal's forces were eventually worn down after the Battle of Cannae, and were inferior to the enemy in most respects. (The one exception was his cavalry.)¹⁸

As the Roman legions grew in both quantity and quality, Hannibal's army decreased in both areas. Eventually, he was forced to conduct defensive operations. Hannibal's fabulous internal strength was best exhibited during the years when he was on the defensive and under great adversity. During these years, Hannibal, the commander, was at his very best. Any lesser man would have given up, quit the struggle and surrendered to the Romans, or negotiated some kind of a settlement. Not Hannibal--he fought on to the very end, totally isolated from his country, with no hope of reinforcements or substantial help of any kind from any source.

Hannibal's difficulties in the second Punic War occurred during the time period when the Romans were at the height of their power. They should have been able to crush him, but they appeared unwilling or unable to do so. One reason they didn't crush him was out of respect for him. Even at his weakest point they seemed unwilling to openly challenge him in a set piece battle. In addition to this, they never felt the odds were overwhelmingly on their side. When Hannibal finally left the country of Italy it was on his own terms and the Romans did little to try to impede his retreat. It appears they let him slip quietly away across the Mediterranean Sea back to his own country.¹⁹ He was not tactically defeated on the battlefield, but only left because Carthage had asked him to

¹⁸ Trevor N. Dupuy, Curt Johnson, and David L. Bongard, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1992), 681.

¹⁹ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 593.

return and defend them against Roman aggression. This was the way the Romans used their operational leverage--not tactical advantage on the battlefield--to force Hannibal out of Italy. One of Hannibal's finest leadership characteristics was his unconquerable spirit--his **mental and physical toughness**.

Another of Hannibal's excellent leadership characteristics was his ability to **adapt** to changing situations. A good definition of **adaptability** is "capable of being adapted; able to adjust readily to different conditions." The fact that he was adaptable to the ever-changing tactical situation is evidenced by his many victories on the battlefield. As Hannibal continued to fight the Romans, he found it necessary to adjust his tactics, techniques, and procedures (as we would refer to them today). At the battle of Herdonia, around 210 B.C., Hannibal adjusted the use of the phalanx and began to evolve his organization into a unit more capable of dealing with the cohorts of the Roman legion.

It will be noticed that the habit of making two lines of cohorts was growing. In battles against the nations so far encountered, the Romans had found the one line of cohorts, that is, one line having the principes, hastati and triarii, sufficient. But against the violent onslaughts of Hannibal, the Roman generals had begun to double their lines. The Carthaginians had found the same device serviceable against the wonderful tenacity of the Roman legionary, and used two lines in many cases, beginning with this period. As about this time there was a transition in Hannibal's organization, so that his phalanx was gradually adopting some of the features of the legion, it is hard to say how heavy a line this made.²⁰

Aside from the organizational changes Hannibal made to his army, he seemed to possess the innate ability to adapt to difficult situations, and to quickly implement solutions to the problems that lay before him. Another great example of Hannibal's adaptability was noted in the previous chapter when he crossed the Rhone River. Here he had to perform a river crossing with elephants and face a hostile army waiting for him on

²⁰ Ibid., 497.

the opposite shore. Undaunted in this undertaking, he made preparations to move the elephants across the river. He had special rafts with dirt floors constructed so that the elephants would get on the rafts and cross the river. While this was going on, he sent a small army across the river upstream so that, at the right moment, they could attack the rear of the unfriendly Gauls and enable the main body of the army to cross the river, as well.

There were times when he broke all the established procedures of the day to meet a certain challenge or threat to his army. Good examples of this were the unique adaptations of his march column to meet the challenges of a threatening situation. During his march through the Alps, when the local barbarians threatened to destroy his army as they moved through the passes, he took the unusual precaution of placing his heavy infantry at the rear of the formation to protect his field trains (normally they were placed in the vanguard, or front). This unusual action saved his army from almost certain destruction.²¹ Another instance was shown when Hannibal used the oxen with fire on their horns to deceive the enemy as to his intent and the direction of his army. Additionally, when marching through the Arnum Marshes, he placed his cavalry (normally found at the front of a formation) in the rear of his column to prod the reluctant Gauls.²² Hannibal's ability to adapt quickly to changing situations is another of the leadership characteristics that made him a great leader and contributed to his success on the battlefield.

²¹ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 63.

²² Polybius, *General History*, 188.

Hannibal was also a **selfless leader**, a great soldier who placed other soldiers' needs above his own wants and needs. He put service to his country above his own desires. A good definition of selflessness that seems to fit Hannibal is "having little or no concern for oneself, especially as regards fame, position, money, etc.; unselfish."²³ General Alexander M. Patch said of selflessness: "Second to honesty and courage of purpose, I would place an unselfish attitude as the greatest attribute of a leader . . . Place the care and protection of the men first; share their hardships without complaint and when the real test comes you will find that they possess a genuine respect and admiration for you. To do otherwise means failure at the crucial moment when the support of your men is essential to the success of the battle."²⁴

The Romans accused Hannibal of being avarice, believing he conquered to build his own personal wealth. Hannibal was known to have great personal wealth. The Barca family was one of nobility and influence, one of the greatest families in Carthage, who possessed many mines and lands that produced gold, silver, and other precious items. However, in the spirit of selfless service, he used his wealth to pay for the needs of his army. He did not use it for his own selfish desires nor lock his gold away in a vault, but used every grain of gold dust and coin to feed and equip his army.²⁵ He cherished his men and strove to take care of their needs above even his own for he realized that without their loyalty, dedication and support he could accomplish nothing. The best leaders are those who serve their soldiers, not the other way around.

²³ Random House College Dictionary, 1194.

²⁴ FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, 4-5.

²⁵ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 625.

Hannibal's selflessness was also demonstrated because he served his country for more than twenty-five years, first as commander in chief of all their armed forces and, following the Second Punic War, as chief magistrate of Carthage. He served his country with distinction, fighting and conquering their enemies for over fifteen years. During his tenure as chief magistrate, he reorganized the city's finances, helping them recover from the war and putting them back on the road to economic prosperity. The Romans became jealous of Carthage's recovery and sought to use elements in the Carthaginian government that were friendly to the Roman government to unseat Hannibal. The Romans accused Hannibal of trying to foster an alliance with Antiochus the Great, of Syria, to wage war against the Romans. The Romans eventually obtained enough support in the Carthaginian government that Hannibal was forced to flee Carthage to the Seleucid empire in the east in 195 B.C.²⁶ The Romans were not content with Hannibal's departure, and continued to hunt him for thirteen years finally forcing him to commit suicide in Bithynia in 183 B.C.²⁷ The point is, Hannibal was ultimately betrayed by the people in his own government. These are the very people to whom he had so selflessly dedicated his entire life. He understood, as few did, the heart and minds of the Romans, and knew that trying to appease them with money and relinquishment of lands or power, would hold them at bay only temporarily. He knew the only way to appease the Romans was to give them more and more influence over Carthage and that ultimately they would destroy it. This attempt to appease Rome is exactly what disarmed the Carthaginians and led to the Third Punic War and to Carthage's ultimate destruction.

²⁶ Bradford, *Hannibal*, 206.

²⁷ Ibid., 14.

Hannibal was selfless, even though it meant doing the hard thing time after time. Ultimately, his selflessness cost him his life in helping a friend--a distant king also beseeched by the Romans. As one historian says of Hannibal, he seems to have vanished as quickly as he came, though having tremendous impact on the world in the fifteen-plus years that he dominated as the finest commander/leader of his age. "Hannibal, the boy from north Africa who grows up to dominate European history . . . seems to vanish like the mist rising off Lake Trasimene on that fateful day; or like the south wind, the sun and the dust that blinded the Romans at Cannae. . . . 'the man who exercise[d] absolute authority is constrained to assume a pose of invariable reserve.'"²⁸

²⁸ Ibid., 212.

CHAPTER 5

THE RELEVANCY OF HANNIBAL'S LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS—TODAY

No captain ever marched to and fro among so many armies of troops superior to his in number and material as fearlessly and skillfully as he. No man ever held his own so long or so ably against such odds. Constantly overmatched by better soldiers led by generals always respectable, often of great ability, he yet defied all their efforts to drive him from Italy for half a generation. Not even Frederick was outweighed, as was Hannibal, for though Frederick's army was smaller, it was better than that of any of the allies.

As a soldier, in the countenance he presented to the stoutest of foes and in the constancy he exhibited under the bitterest adversity, Hannibal stands alone and unequaled. As a man, no character in history exhibits a purer life or nobler patriotism.¹

Dodge, *Hannibal*

Hannibal's life as a soldier was extraordinary. He was one of history's greatest leaders, and he demonstrated the use of many leadership principles to obtain success on the battlefield. As stated in the previous chapter, he exhibited strong leadership characteristics and values of courage, confidence, communication (leadership by example), mental and physical toughness, selflessness and adaptability. These leadership traits transcend 2,000 years and are still relevant for leaders today. The relevancy of these leadership characteristics and values have been demonstrated time and again in the lives and actions of contemporary nineteenth and twentieth century United States (U.S.) military leaders. (It is interesting to note that each of the following leaders, like Hannibal, were second generation soldiers, with the exception of George S. Patton Jr., whose grandfather was a Colonel.) Thus, in each of the lives of the leaders that follow, one or more of the characteristics or values defined in chapter four, contributed to their success in leading soldiers on the battlefield.

¹ Dodge, *Hannibal*, 652-653.

This chapter will relate brief examples from the lives of six soldiers who became general officers in the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These officers' actions clearly illustrate the relevancy and applicability of Hannibal's leadership characteristics today by exhibiting those same characteristics in their lives.

Following is a brief description of the six officers: Lieutenant General (LTG) Benjamin O. Davis Jr., an Air Force general officer, began his career in the Army after graduating from West Point in 1936. Initially, he flew with the Army Air Corps which, following World War II, became the U.S. Air Force. He displayed tremendous **moral and physical courage** all of his life and most particularly during World War II as commander of the 99th Pursuit Squadron and 332nd Fighter Group.

General of the Army, Douglas A. MacArthur, exhibited great **confidence** while leading American and Allied troops to repeat victories throughout World War I, World War II, and the Korean War.

MG Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain **communicated** to his soldiers **leadership by example** throughout his service during the American Civil War. At the Battle of Gettysburg he earned the Medal of Honor, America's highest military award, for heroic combat actions.

General George S. Patton used **mental and physical toughness** to achieve success in campaigns such as the Battle of the Bulge during World War II. His decisive leadership under great duress helped defeat the strong German offensive aimed at defeating the Allies.

LTG Robert E. Lee, the Confederate Commander of the Northern Army of Virginia during the Civil War, was known as one of the most beloved Army commanders of all time, largely because of his **selflessness**.

And, finally, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, who displayed a superb capacity to **adapt** to the enemy and the changing political situation by using a multinational army (composed of Arabs, French, British and Americans), and defeated the fourth largest army in the world--Iraq--in less than two months during Operation Desert Storm. Each general, and the leadership trait that best suits him, will be discussed in turn, beginning with Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis Jr. and the characteristic of courage.

The renowned military theorist Antoine-Henri Jomini in his *Articles of War* expressed this thought concerning the importance of leaders who possess courage. He further pointed out the difference between moral courage and physical courage, stating that moral courage is the most important of the two. "The qualities most essential for a general-in-chief will ever be: A great character, or moral courage which leads to great resolutions; then sang-froid or physical courage which predominates over dangers. Knowledge appears but in the third rank."² Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis Jr., displayed great **moral and physical courage** throughout his military career, both on and off the battlefield.

Benjamin O. Davis Jr. was born 18 December 1912, in Washington, D.C., to 1st Lieutenant Benjamin O. Davis Sr. (later to become America's first African American general officer) and Elnora Dickerson Davis. When the younger Davis was born, racial discrimination in America was strong, and racist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan

² C610, *The Evolution of Modern Warfare*, 245.

(KKK) wielded significant prejudicial influence against African-Americans, particularly in many of the southern states. In the early 1920's, Benjamin O Davis Sr. was serving in the regular army as a military instructor at the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama. It was there that the younger Davis received his first lesson from his father on the importance of moral courage.

About a mile and or so from the Tuskegee Institute, a new hospital for black veterans had recently been completed. To protest the hiring of black people to work in the hospital, the KKK planned a full "white hooded" march past the Institute. All the African-Americans living in the vicinity of the area where the march would take place were told to stay inside their homes and keep their lights turned off. Benjamin O. Davis Sr. was not to be intimidated by the KKK, however. As the Klan marched down the Davis' street, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Davis and his family were seen sitting on the front porch of their home, with LTC Davis dressed in his best Army uniform (his dress whites). In later years the younger Davis wrote of the incident: "Our porch light was the only light to be seen for miles around except for the flaming torches of the Klansmen."³ He was very impressed by his father's moral courage, and emulated the same courage throughout his own life.⁴

As the young Davis grew into a fine young man, he decided he wanted to be a soldier like his father. He applied to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. As he later wrote, "No matter what obstacles might present

³ Catherine Reef, *Benjamin Davis, Jr.* (Frederick: Twenty-First Century Books, 1992), 21.

⁴ Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.: American* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1991), 13.

themselves, I was determined to attend West Point and pursue the career my father had chosen.”⁵ In 1931 the only black representative then in Congress, Oscar De Priest, of Illinois, sponsored Davis to the Military Academy. With De Priest’s support, Davis secured an appointment at the academy.

In the spring of 1931, Davis took the entrance examination for West Point and failed. Temporarily discouraged, but still undaunted, he studied hard for a year and passed the examination in 1932. He entered West Point with high expectations--proud to belong to America’s finest military institution. His dreams, however, were soon shattered. The third night he was there he was invited to attend a meeting with the other cadets in the basement of their building. As he approached the place for the meeting, he clearly heard one of the other cadets ask, “What are we going to do about the nigger?”⁶ Davis, who was the only black cadet at West Point at the time, was so hurt by the comment that he immediately went back to his room and did not attend the meeting.

The day after the meeting, and for the next four years, Cadet Davis was “silenced” by the other cadets at West Point. This means no other cadets were allowed to room with him, sit by him on the bus, or talk to him during school and other activities. His table assignment in the mess hall constantly changed because no cadets wanted to sit with him. As he later said, “This cruel treatment was designed to make me buckle, but I refused to buckle in any way. I maintained my self-respect.”⁷ Indeed, Cadet Davis not only endured the silencing of his peers, but also graduated successfully from West Point in

⁵ Reef, *Benjamin Davis, Jr.*, 25.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

1936--overall he ranked 35 in a class of 276.⁸ He graduated as an honor student. Davis had the moral courage to complete his training and education under the most difficult of circumstances. The moral courage he developed at West Point would serve him well throughout his career as a soldier--on battlefields and as an advocate of equal rights for all Americans.

After graduating from West Point, Davis was sent to the Army infantry school at Fort Benning, Georgia. He was dissatisfied with this assignment, however, because from the time he was a young boy all he had ever really wanted to do was fly. Davis could recall the day, in 1926, when his father took him to Bolling Field in Washington, D.C. to watch daredevil pilots perform aerial stunts. His father paid one of the pilots five dollars to take his son for a ride. From that day on he had wanted to fly. Young Davis was also fascinated by the stories about Charles Lindbergh and his solo flight across the Atlantic. He had hoped he could get accepted into the Army Air Corps after his graduation from the academy. He applied to attend pilot training prior to graduation, but was rejected because there were no black units in the Air Corps and, according to General William Connor, the superintendent of West Point, "It was not logical for a black officer to command white troops."⁹

By 1940 this attitude had changed. With war clouds looming on the horizon, President Franklin D. Roosevelt cleared the way for the formation of a black flying unit--the 99th Pursuit Squadron--and Benjamin O. Davis Jr. was named to command the unit. The group trained in Tuskegee, Alabama, and became known as the Tuskegee Airmen.

⁸ Davis, *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.: American*, 48.

⁹ Reef, *Benjamin Davis, Jr.*, 37.

On 7 March 1942 Davis and the other cadets completed their training and received their “wings,” becoming the first black pilots in the Army Air Corps. After receiving several more graduates, the newly formed squadron received orders to go to North Africa in March of 1943. The squadron flew many combat missions in North Africa and Sicily under Davis’ leadership and earned great distinction during battle. Because of the 99th’s success, Davis was called back to the U.S., promoted to full colonel and given command of the 332nd Fighter Group. While Davis was in the states, Colonel William Momyer, a commander in the Mediterranean, submitted a negative report concerning the operations of the 99th and the skills of all black units. His report recommended that the 99th be removed from combat and was endorsed by other officers in the chain of command. Davis knew the recommendation was unfounded and that if the report went unchallenged it would mean the end of the Tuskegee Airmen, and all other black air corps units. Davis challenged the findings, but, as he said, “I had to adopt a quiet, reasoned approach, presenting the facts in a way that would appeal to fairness and win out over ignorance and racism.”¹⁰ An independent army investigation was initiated and ultimately decided that the 99th Pursuit Squadron was no different than the balance of other fighter units in the Mediterranean.

Davis assumed command of the 332nd Fighter Group and, on 3 January 1944, sailed with the group for Italy. The 99th Fighter Squadron was part of the 332nd Fighter Group, later to become known as the infamous “Red Tails” (the rear tails of the fighters were painted red), who never lost a single bomber on any of their escort missions. Colonel Davis personally led many of the bomber escort missions and was awarded the

¹⁰ Ibid., 54.

Distinguished Flying Cross for leading a very hazardous mission over the city of Munich. Many of Colonel Davis' pilots were also given awards for their bravery and courage. The pilots of the 332nd "earned a reputation for sticking with the bombers over a target--the most dangerous part of any bombing mission--and for safely escorting the bombers back to base."¹¹

After World War II, Benjamin O. Davis Jr. served with the Air Force for more than two decades, continuing to improve the excellence of his highly trained and spirited combat units. He was promoted to Brigadier General (the first black general in the Air Force), then Major General, and retired as a Lieutenant General. During his time in the Air Force he served in many foreign countries, to include Korea, Germany, Japan, and Taiwan. He had great courage--both morally and physically--evidenced by what he was willing to go through to become an officer and a pilot and also by his tremendous success as commander of the 99th Pursuit Squadron and 332nd Fighter Group. LTG Benjamin O. Davis' greatest success transcended the battlefield, as he said, "The wartime performance of the black fighter units I had commanded and the success of Lockbourne Air Force Base influenced the Air Force's decision to integrate."¹² In May of 1949, the Air Force integrated. LTG Benjamin O. Davis Jr. exhibited the same type of courage as Hannibal, only differing in time, circumstance and enemy. As mentioned previously, Hannibal exhibited tremendous moral courage after he attacked Saguntum. When Hannibal's government vacillated in its support of the attack, he remained firm in what he believed was the best course of action. Rome sent a delegation to Hannibal and to

¹¹ Ibid., 56.

¹² Ibid., 60.

Carthage, threatening war if Hannibal did not withdraw his forces. Hannibal stood by his principles, told the delegates he would not withdraw his forces, and sent them back to Rome. LTG Davis and Hannibal both exhibited great moral courage, which brought them success on and off the battlefield.

Another of Hannibal's strong leadership traits was confidence. Confidence was an essential element of Hannibal's success and is as important today as it was then. He demonstrated great confidence when he led his army over the Alps to attack the Romans. He would not have undertaken such an arduous venture if he were not confident of success. His confidence extended to his soldiers, who followed him under the most adverse conditions--willing to do so because they trusted and believed in him. They believed he knew what he was doing. Thus, confidence is an essential ingredient of military leadership and has at its root technical/tactical competence, which is based largely on intelligence. "It takes more than tanks and guns and planes to win. It takes more than masses of men. It takes more than heroism, more than self-sacrifice, more than leadership. Modern war requires trained minds. . . . The days of unthinking masses of firepower are over. Individual intelligence, individual understanding and individual initiative in all ranks will be powerful weapons in our ultimate success."¹³

General Douglas MacArthur is one of the finest examples of a twentieth century leader who, like Hannibal of old, possessed extraordinary **confidence** which brought him tremendous success on the battlefield. MacArthur once said, "That's the way it is in

¹³ FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, 5-5. Quoted from General Brehon Somervell, *Public Addresses, 1941-1942*.

war. You win or lose, live or die--and the difference is just an eyelash."¹⁴ Confidence can make the difference.

Douglas MacArthur was born at Little Rock Barracks, Arkansas, son of the famous general, Arthur MacArthur. Douglas graduated first in his class at West Point in June of 1903. As a new second lieutenant he was branched in the Corps of Engineers and sent to the Philippines. From 1905 to 1906 he served as an aide to his father in Asia, then served as an aide to President Theodore Roosevelt from 1906 to 1907. General MacArthur served with distinction during World War I, acting as a chief of staff, brigade commander, and then division commander of the 42nd Infantry Division.¹⁵

During World War I, the first wholly American manned and commanded army to see action, the 42nd Infantry Division, was assigned by Marshal Ferdinand Foch, on 12 September 1918, to attack St. Mihiel. MacArthur commanded the 84th Brigade of the 42nd Division. During the campaign, MacArthur slept little (going as many as eight days without sleep) as he prepared his brigade for their arduous campaign. Once the offensive against St. Mihiel commenced, MacArthur called for artillery fire to soften the enemy positions prior to the infantry assault. The artillery barrage, which began at 6:00 A.M., proceeded the infantry assault by ten minutes. Five minutes after the barrage started, but before it had ended, MacArthur personally led his brigade out of their trenches, across "No Man's Land," and into the German fortifications, very much like Hannibal when he

¹⁴ MacArthur, Douglas A., *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1964), 145.

¹⁵ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 462.

led his men through the night to the deserted mountain posts of the Barbarians and personally led the attack against them the next day.

With American artillery shells bursting in the German lines, MacArthur's brigade went forward, attacked the German line and won the position. MacArthur was heard to say as he led the charge forward, "We'll take our chances with our own marksmen!"¹⁶ MacArthur quickly established a reputation of self-confidence with his superiors and soldiers, which contributed to his success on the battlefield. He came to be respected for exhibiting calmness and confidence.

With feats such as these, and many more which could be mentioned, Douglas MacArthur left World War I as one of the most decorated soldiers of the war. His awards included two Distinguished Service Crosses, a Silver Star, a Purple Heart, and decorations from France, Belgium and Italy.

Many have wondered why he seemed immune to death while so many around him were killed. MacArthur answered the question, stating, "God led me by the hand--led me by the hand. There were so many times I shouldn't have escaped."¹⁷ To emphasize the point, he told of a combat situation when the 42nd was stopped from forward progress by the German defenses, and he felt it necessary to do nighttime leaders' reconnaissance to determine the strength of the German positions. As he led his recon team forward, the Germans opened fire. All members of the team hit the ground. When the fire subsided, MacArthur called out to his men, telling them he would lead them back to their lines.

¹⁶ Considine, Bob, *General Douglas MacArthur* (Greenwich: Gold Medal Books, 1964), 23.

¹⁷ Ibid., 26.

There was no response, and as he crawled to each soldier's shell hole or position, he found them all dead.¹⁸ MacArthur was the only one to make it back to the American lines alive. His combat experience and success in World War I built his personal self-confidence, which proved to be a valuable character trait, time after time, as he served his country through World War II and Korea.

After World War I, MacArthur occupied a number of important Army positions, including superintendent of West Point (1919-1922), Major General in the Philippines (October 1922-January 1925), Department of the Philippines commander (1928-1930), Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (1930-1935), and as a permanent major general when he returned to the Philippines in October 1935. In 1937, he retired in the Philippines, but was recalled to active duty by President Roosevelt on 26 July 1941, promoted to the rank of lieutenant general, and given command of U.S. Army Forces in the Far East. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, they attacked the Philippine Islands where MacArthur commanded the defense of Bataan and Manila Bay. He was ordered by President Roosevelt to leave the Philippines and go to Australia on 11 March 1942. MacArthur left by PT boat, penetrated the Japanese naval blockade to reach Mindanao, and then flew by B-17 to Australia. He received the Medal of Honor for his bold escape.¹⁹ After his arrival in Australia, he pronounced to the world these immortal words: "The President of the United States ordered me to break through the Japanese lines and proceed from Corregidor to Australia for the purpose, as I understand it, of organizing the American offensive against Japan, a primary object of which is the relief of the Philippines.

¹⁸ Ibid, 27.

¹⁹ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 462.

“I came through and I shall return.”²⁰

After taking charge of the war effort in Australia, MacArthur moved immediately to seize the initiative from the Japanese. Instead of defending Australia on Australian soil (which was the proposed plan of the Australian and British governments, and also Washington, D.C.), MacArthur stunned everyone by proposing that the defense of Australia begin in New Guinea. With an ill-trained, inexperienced and inadequate force, and insufficient naval and air support, MacArthur embarked on an extremely risky offensive in November of 1942 by attacking Buna, a Japanese stronghold in southeastern New Guinea. The attack was successful and the first of a series of leap frog campaigns across northern New Guinea, which led to the invasion of western New Britain (15-30 December 1943) and isolated the Japanese strongholds at Rabaul. Success in these campaigns led to even greater victories at Hollandia and Aitape, which cut off the entire Eighteenth Japanese Army.

Eventually MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz worked their way back to the Philippines, attacking the Japanese at Leyte Gulf on 20 October 1944. MacArthur had fulfilled his promise and had, indeed, returned to the Philippines, eventually liberating them.²¹ The defeat of the Japanese in the Pacific Theater was one of General MacArthur’s finest accomplishments.

After MacArthur was promoted to General of the Army (a five-star general—the highest rank attainable in the military), and shortly before the Japanese surrender on 2

²⁰ Considine, *General Douglas MacArthur*, 71.

²¹ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 462.

September 1945,²² historian Douglas Southall Freeman wrote to MacArthur and said, “Stonewall Jackson is reported to have said, in appraising Lee, ‘The true worth of a commander-in-chief is only tested and proved under adversity. Any commander can win when he has superior force and unlimited resources on his side, but your real captain is the one who faces desperate odds, is not destroyed, comes back to fight again, and mayhap to win, even with the odds against him!’”²³ This statement certainly fits both MacArthur and Hannibal.

MacArthur, like Hannibal, fought with limited resources in the Pacific, initially against superior forces. But, like Hannibal, MacArthur had tremendous confidence in his abilities as a soldier and he displayed it time and again throughout his military life. This personal self-confidence inspired the soldiers who served with him and they followed their leader to success on the battlefield. The renowned military theorist Clausewitz said these words about self-confidence, and its pivotal role on the battlefield, “Courage and self-confidence are essential in war, and theory should propose only rules that give ample scope to these finest and least dispensable of military virtues, in all their degrees and variations.”²⁴ Where in history is there a greater example of confidence-in-action than MacArthur displayed at Inchon during the Korean War?

After the Japanese surrendered at Tokyo Bay, MacArthur became supreme commander of Allied occupation forces in Japan. He served in this position--rebuilding the Japanese nation, and bringing about beneficial reforms in government and industry--

²² Ibid., 463.

²³ Considine, *General Douglas MacArthur*, 82.

²⁴ C610, *The Evolution of Modern Warfare*, 217.

until 25 June 1950 when he was made supreme commander of United Nations (U.N.) Forces in Korea.²⁵ At the age of 70 MacArthur assumed command of the U.N. forces in Korea and advanced his forces against the North Koreans, who had invaded South Korea. The North Koreans quickly captured Seoul, then pushed the unprepared U.N. forces south all the way to Taegu where they formed the last line of defense around the Pusan perimeter. The situation was desperate, requiring immediate relief and decisive action in order to avoid capitulation of all U.N. forces in Korea.

Under these circumstances, MacArthur planned to execute "the greatest gamble of his military life, the amphibious landing at Inchon, far to the north of the battle lines. . . . the only hope of wresting the initiative from the enemy and of creating the opportunity for a devastating blow."²⁶ MacArthur said, "The enemy commander will reason that no one would be so brash as to make such an attempt."²⁷ Defying all odds, MacArthur received begrudging approval from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the president, and launched the strike on 15 September 1950. The tasks for his army included fighting their way into the Inchon harbor and securing a beachhead. Then, in a little over two hours, moving the rest of the men and the equipment ashore, risking much of the naval armada to low tide, grounding them on the mud flats until the next high tide moved them back to sea. An essential element of his plan was the taking of Korea's biggest airfield, at Kimpo, in order to gain and maintain air superiority. Kimpo's airfield fell within the first 48 hours of the operation. After establishing the beachhead, his counterattacking

²⁵ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 463.

²⁶ Considine, *General Douglas MacArthur*, 91.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

army would push inland, cutting off the North Korean lines of communication to the south.

The landing at Inchon took the enemy completely by surprise and within a week after the attack MacArthur had retaken Seoul, South Korea. The North Korean army south of Seoul, which was attacking the Pusan perimeter, became isolated, cutoff from their northern re-supply lines and quickly capitulated.

After this tremendous victory, President Harry S. Truman wired General MacArthur: "I know that I speak for the entire American people when I send my warmest congratulations on the victory which has been achieved under your leadership in Korea. Few operations in military history can match the delaying action where you traded space for time in which to build up your forces, or the brilliant maneuver which has now resulted in the liberation of Seoul."²⁸

MacArthur is a wonderful example of a 20th century commander who strongly exhibited the characteristic of confidence. MacArthur's confidence at Inchon was akin to Hannibal's at the Battle of Cannae where he determined he could beat the odds and defeat a superior enemy who thought his chances of success were impossible. Time after time Hannibal's confidence is what kept his army going. They genuinely believed in him, and willingly followed him anywhere, as evidenced during his occupation of the Italian Peninsula. The greatest of leaders will always possess confidence! And, because confidence produces success on the battlefield, their soldiers will follow them.

²⁸ Ibid., 91.

Hannibal also demonstrated the leadership trait of communication (leadership by example), which is one of the most powerful tools a leader has for influencing his soldiers. US Army FM 22-100 states the importance of communication as:

Senior leaders exert a remarkable deal of influence by the way they act. The power of example is great. Leaders win confidence and loyalty through their actions. Soldiers emulate the behavior of their leaders. Setting the example requires both moral and physical courage. Leaders set the example by establishing and maintaining high, but attainable, goals and standards. They must also ensure that their own actions match what they say. It is essential that leaders share the dangers and hardships of their units because they demonstrate their professionalism by everything they say and do. Senior leaders model the Army value of honor: defined by courage, integrity, loyalty, duty, selfless service and respect.²⁹

A great example of a nineteenth century soldier who exhibited strong **communication skills (leadership by example)** similar to Hannibal's, was Brevet MG Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain. He was born on 8 September 1828, in Brewer, Maine, to a family which had acquired its name from Richard de Tankerville (grandson of a Norman knight), who was chamberlain to King Stephen of England in the twelfth century. Chamberlain became a soldier during the American Civil War, though he had originally planned to be a missionary. He graduated from the Bangor Theological Seminary and was teaching at Bowdoin College when the Civil War broke out.³⁰

His military career was one of exceptional brilliance and gallantry--initially he was appointed as a Lieutenant Colonel by the governor of Maine to serve in the 20th Maine regiment, where he assumed responsibility as the deputy commander, and then later, as commander. He was an officer who was noted for putting himself into the thick of battle.

²⁹ FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, 10-9.

³⁰ Willard M. Wallace, *Soul of the Lion* (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons: 1960), 17.

During his service as an officer in the Civil War, fourteen horses were shot out from underneath him. He was terribly wounded on a number of occasions, to include Petersburg, where he received his fourth wound in June of 1864. It was there that General Ulysses S. Grant (commander in chief of Union forces) was so impressed by Chamberlain's gallantry that he "promoted him to Brigadier General on the field."³¹ Later in the war, Chamberlain received the Medal of Honor (the highest military award bestowed on a soldier in America) for his heroic actions as commander of the 20th Maine regiment on Little Round Top, 2 July 1863, during the Battle of Gettysburg.

The crowning moment for Chamberlain, however, took place at Appomattox Courthouse on 12 April 1865, when he was designated to receive the possession of the Confederate Army, after Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant.

Joshua Chamberlain acquired the reputation of being a severe disciplinarian who was also fair and just with his soldiers. He looked after his men, believed in sharing their hardships, and expected no feats of courage from them that he was unwillingly to participate in or lead himself. The result of his leadership style garnered him the respect and loyalty of his men.³² In many respects Chamberlain commanded the same kind of respect from his soldiers that Hannibal had from his. The core of Hannibal's army, consisting of Africans, Iberians and Numidians, never deserted him or his cause during the entire fourteen years he stayed in Italy.

³¹ Faust, ed., *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia*, 125.

³² Wallace, *Soul of the Lion*, 68.

A good example of Chamberlain who, like Hannibal, shared the same hardships and dangers as his men, was seen immediately after the Battle of Antietam. After the fighting, as the Confederates withdrew, Union General George B. McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac, sent his Fifth Corps to pursue the retreating Confederates. The 20th Maine was one of the six regiments of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, Fifth Corps sent to pursue Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. When Union forces reached Shepherdstown Ford, they attempted to cross the Potomac River as the Confederates assumed the high ground on the other side. The heavy fire of Confederate guns forced the Union troops to retreat, all except the 20th Maine, who plunged on ahead having received no orders to the contrary. When the 20th Maine finally reached the Virginia side of the shore, bugles blew on the Maryland side, sounding retreat. The 20th Maine went back into the Potomac River all the while under heavy fire from Confederate infantry. During this time of alarm and peril the Fifth Corps historian recorded that Chamberlain sat on his horse in the middle of the Potomac River apparently undisturbed by the heavy fire all around him and unconcerned for his own safety. The corps historian made a note saying Chamberlain very calmly "was steadying the men through a deep place in the river, where several of the 5th New York were drowned in his presence."³³ The Confederate sharp shooters zeroed in on Chamberlain, missing him and hitting his horse. His steadiness and concern for his soldiers' welfare paid off as the 20th Maine suffered only three casualties on this occasion.

This account is reminiscent of the account related in chapter two where Hannibal led his army through the middle of the night, using oxen with fire-brush tied to their

³³ Ibid., 42.

horns, to deceive the enemy of his axis of advance. He led them through a Roman army that had totally surrounded his army and were sure they would annihilate him. Though in trying circumstances, by keeping his cool he saved his army from certain destruction.

Another example of Chamberlain's willingness to share the same hardships as his soldiers was at the Battle of Fredericksburg, fought 13 December 1862. Here, Union General Ambrose E. Burnside, had replaced General McClellan, as commander-in-chief of the Army of the Potomac. General Burnside's Union army again faced the indomitable army of General Robert E. Lee.

When Burnside and Lee finally squared off for battle, Lee held the best terrain of the high ground overlooking the town of Fredericksburg. Lee's strategy was to let the Federal army take the initiative and attack up the hill against a strong defensive line reinforced near the crest of a ridge with a stone wall protecting Confederate positions. After the Federal army crossed the Rappahannock River, they attacked the two defending Confederate corps of Lee's Confederate Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Pete Longstreet and Lieutenant General Thomas (Stonewall) Jackson.³⁴

The 20th Maine went up the hill as part of the Union attack. As the 20th Maine surged forward they suffered heavy casualties and were stopped short of reaching the Confederate-held ridge. Chamberlain would later say of the bloody assault, "We were directed straight forward toward the left of the futile advance we had seen so fearfully cut down."³⁵ Chamberlain's regiment scrambled over the bodies of the dead and wounded

³⁴ Faust, *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Civil War*, 288-289.

³⁵ Wallace, *Soul of the Lion*, 53.

soldiers from the regiment preceding their assault. ““We reached the final crest, before that all-commanding, countermanding stonewall,’ said Chamberlain. ‘Here we exchanged fierce volleys at every disadvantage, until the muzzle-flame deepened the sunset red, and all was dark.””³⁶

As the cold winter night sent temperatures plummeting, the soldiers of the 20th Maine lay on the cold, barren ground, because of heavy enemy fire and having received no orders to retreat to Fredericksburg. They listened to the cries of the wounded lying all around them. Chamberlain pulled the bodies of three dead corpses around himself to stay warm and for protection from the sharp shooters of the Confederate infantry. As Chamberlain lay on the cold ground, listening to the suffering of the wounded, he felt he needed to do something to assist them. Though under sniper fire and very uncomfortable himself, Chamberlain arose from his hastily-made shelter of human dead, putting his own life at risk. Chamberlain sought and found the Adjutant, John Brown, and together they “went out onto the field, straightening limbs, bandaging wounds, holding a canteen to lips that drank greedily in an attempt to quench the feverish thirst that accompanies wounds, quickly writing down the last wishes of a dying man to send to some distant home.”³⁷ Chamberlain’s actions communicated leadership by example even under the most arduous conditions, and this endeared him to his soldiers.

The final evidence cited to show Chamberlain’s communicative skills and the power of leadership by example is found in his actions on Little Round Top, on 2 July 1863, at the Battle of Gettysburg. On day one of the battle, the Confederate Army of

³⁶ Ibid., 53-54.

³⁷ Ibid., 54.

Northern Virginia, commanded by Robert E. Lee, had pushed the Union Army, commanded by George G. Meade, through the town of Gettysburg to the heights of Cemetery Ridge, where Union infantry dug in, expecting the imminent attack of Confederate forces. The Union defensive line formed a fish hook which extended along a ridge line from Culp's Hill in the north to the rocky hill of Little Round Top in the south. When the Union defensive line was established on the evening of day one, however, no Union forces were placed on Little Round Top, the high ground on the left flank of the Union line. The evening of day one passed without major incident. On day two of the fighting (July 2nd), the Confederates focused their attack on the left flank of the Union Army, knowing Little Round Top was key terrain and realizing if they could seize Little Round Top, they could roll up the left flank and destroy the Union Army.

When the Confederates chose Little Round Top as their objective and attacked the left flank of the Union Army, it became clear to Union commanders (almost too late) that if Little Round Top fell, their position would become perilous. Colonel Chamberlain's 20th Maine Regiment was given the mission of preventing the Confederates from rolling up Little Round Top and caving in the left flank of the Union Army. They were told to "hold that ground at all hazards."³⁸ It was not long after Chamberlain placed his regiment in a defensive line that the Confederates attacked, continually trying to get around the flank of the 20th Maine. Chamberlain's regiment threw back each Confederate attempt, with Chamberlain extending and readjusting his line to accommodate the flanking efforts of the attacking Confederates. By 7:00 PM, the situation of the 20th Maine was

³⁸ James M. McPherson, *Gettysburg* (Atlanta: Turner Publishing, Inc., 1993), 56.

desperate. They had lost more than a third of the unit as casualties and were almost out of ammunition.

In these dire circumstances, as the Confederates reformed for yet another attack, Chamberlain later wrote, "My thoughts were running deep. . . Five minutes more of such a defensive, and the last roll-call could sound for us. Desperate as the chances were, there was nothing for it but to take the offensive. I stepped to the colors. The men turned toward me. One word was enough—'BAYONET!' It caught like wild fire, and swept along the ranks."³⁹ Chamberlain led the bayonet charge down the hill. The shocked Confederates recoiled and fled from Little Round Top, which turned the tide of the battle, preserving the Union left flank. Many historians believe that this heroic charge saved the Union Army from defeat during the Battle of Gettysburg.

Like Hannibal, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain exhibited the power of communication through leadership by example. Hannibal suffered the physical privations from leading at the front (recall Hannibal losing his sight in one eye as he lead his soldiers through Marshes of Arnus) as Chamberlain, he was also wounded on many occasions. Both suffered severe hardship in like manner. They were both great leaders who led by example by sharing many of the same risks as their soldiers. Leadership by example is one of the highest forms of communication a good leader uses to affect the actions of their soldiers.

Another essential element of all good leaders is mental and physical toughness. Mental toughness is needed to handle complex problems faced on the battlefield and

³⁹ Ibid., 58.

physical strength is necessary to sustain the body during periods of prolonged stress. Hannibal displayed these qualities throughout his entire life, but especially on the field of battle. There is little question that his mental and physical toughness were essential ingredients to his success on the battlefield. As Clausewitz wrote, concerning “the climate of war,” he expresses the notion of mental toughness needed by leaders to cope with the stress of battle: “Four elements make up the climate of war: danger, exertion, uncertainty, and chance. If we consider them together, it becomes evident how much fortitude of mind and character are needed to make progress in these impeding elements with safety and success. According to circumstance, reporters and historians of war use such terms as energy, firmness, staunchness, emotional balance, and strength of character.”⁴⁰

General George S. Patton Jr., the famed tank commander of WWII, exhibited **mental and physical toughness**, which, like Hannibal, led to success for his armies on the battlefield. Though Patton was noted for both mental and physical toughness, he was particularly known for his physical toughness. Like Hannibal in his youth, Patton immersed himself in athletics and remained active throughout his life. He enjoyed equestrian activities: horse shows, running the steeple chase, and fox hunting. He was also an excellent swordsman. In 1912, he represented the United States at the Olympics in Stockholm, participating in the military pentathlon, which consisted of swimming, the steeplechase pistol competition, and a 5,000-meter cross-country run. He finished fifth out of forty-three participants. From these activities and others during his life “altogether

⁴⁰ C610, *The Evolution of Modern Warfare*, 221.

he amassed 400 ribbons and 200 cups.”⁴¹ “To many he seemed to be the epitome of the traditional hard-riding, foul-mouthed cavalryman and expert swordsman with a fine record in sport and war and little more.”⁴² Mental and physical toughness were integral parts of Patton and were, to a large degree, responsible for Patton’s resounding success as a commander on the battlefield.

Patton exhibited the highest military standards of professionalism at all times and expected the same of his men. He believed that soldiers emulated the example of their leaders and, therefore, it was essential that they become one with him in body and spirit to accomplish their objectives. He believed without this unity of purpose men, could not face the threat, peril, and dangers of war. This philosophy was expressed by Patton in an article he wrote called “The Secret of Victory” wherein he said, “that the leader himself must be the very epitome of self-confidence, enthusiasm, abnegation and courage; he must so fascinate the men under his command that they each and every one become, to a greater or less degree the embodiment of the leader’s own eager and aggressive personality.”⁴³ Patton’s men emulated his mental and physical toughness and did things no other army accomplished during World War II.

George S. Patton, or “Old Blood and Guts” as he was later to be known, was born in San Gabriel, California, on 11 November 1885. The descendant of a proud, old Virginia military family, he studied at the Virginia Military Institute in 1904, then

⁴¹ H. Essame, *Patton: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1974), 221.

⁴² Ibid., 25.

⁴³ Ibid., 29.

attended the United States Army Military Academy at West Point from 1905-1909. It took Patton an extra year to graduate because he was weak in the technical skills, particularly math. After his commissioning from West Point, he served in the cavalry in a variety of different assignments in various places and earned a reputation for ability, aggressiveness, professionalism, and competence. Among these assignments, he served as an instructor at Fort Riley, Kansas, from 1914-1916, where he wrote the army manual on saber use.⁴⁴

After this assignment, Patton served, as a captain, with General John J. Pershing as a member of his staff on his punitive expedition to Mexico. They were sent to quell the banditry of the famed Mexican bandit, Pancho Villa. Villa was raiding American border towns in New Mexico, along the Mexican border. President Woodrow Wilson sent Pershing, with an expeditionary force of nearly 15,000 soldiers, to hunt down Villa and put an end to his raids in the United States. The incident almost led to another war with Mexico, as Pershing pushed nearly 400 miles into Mexican territory to find Villa. During this incursion into Mexican territory, Patton was leading a small patrol of six soldiers when he clashed with some of Villa's men, to include 'General' Cardenas, one of Villa's bandits. They fired first on the American patrol, and Patton found himself embroiled in a deadly fire fight, in which he personally killed three of the bandits, including General Cardenas. Patton's patrol dispersed the rest of the bandits and returned to Pershing to report the results of the fire fight.

⁴⁴ Dupuy, *The Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 578.

As Patton pulled up to Pershing's headquarters, Pershing was astounded to see that Patton had tied the bodies of the three dead bandits to the running boards of his vehicle—like taking animal trophies home for inspection after the hunt. Patton's actions so impressed General Pershing that they immediately developed a strong, close relationship, which endured through both of their military careers until Patton's death in 1945. After this brief action, Patton's reputation as a hard-charging, aggressive soldier was established forever. The U.S. expeditionary force soon left Mexico, having taught the bandits a lesson.⁴⁵ Hannibal, at an early age, also impressed his superiors, as evidenced by the death of his brother-in-law Hasdrubal, when he was given command of the entire Carthaginian army at the age of twenty-three.

After the expedition into Mexico, Patton became the first American officer to receive tank training. He set up the tank school for American Expeditionary Forces during WWI. During this time period, Patton was promoted, temporarily, to Lieutenant Colonel, then temporary Colonel, and given command of the 1st American Tank Brigade (by Pershing), during World War I. He led the 1st American Tank Brigade into battle in the Saint-Mihiel campaign, 12-17 September 1918, where he was wounded in the hip during the fighting. In spite of his wound, he refused to leave the field until giving final orders to his brigade for completion of the operation. They performed very well, though most of the tanks broke down for mechanical reasons or were forced to stop from lack of fuel. Patton was noted for his exuberance and his desire to lead from the front (though he received a reprimand for doing so). Patton chose to lead from the front because he believed it was his only means of communicating and coordinating the attack of his unit.

⁴⁵ Essame, *Patton*, 6-8.

(Radio had not yet been invented.) During that time, he came upon only one other American officer in the forefront, above the rank of Major--Brigadier General Douglas MacArthur of the 42nd Rainbow Division.⁴⁶

Laid up in a hospital, with a severe wound to his hip the size of a teacup, Patton grew restless and wanted to rejoin the fight with his unit. Patton stayed until he could no longer bear the solitude, and then he and Lieutenant Harry H. Semmes broke out of the hospital, took a car, and set out for Montmedy. They caught up with the American Army at Verdun on 11 November--only to find out the war was over. Escaping from the hospital to fight at the front helped build the Patton mystique of a rough, tough soldier who loved fighting and leading, and would overcome any adversity to so do.⁴⁷

After World War I, Patton reverted back to the rank of captain, but in 1919 was promoted to major. From 1919-1921, he commanded the 304th Tank Brigade at Fort Meade, Maryland, then served in the 3rd Cavalry Regiment from 1921-1922. Following this assignment, he attended Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he was an honor graduate in 1923. After graduation, he served in a number of important staff and troop assignments and was accepted to the Army War College in 1932. Not long after graduation from the War College, he was assigned as executive officer of the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, then served on the general staff, and was promoted to full Colonel in 1937. He commanded the 3rd Cavalry from December of 1938 until July 1940, when he took over command of the 2nd Armored Brigade (as a Brigadier General), then was made acting commander of the 2nd Armored Division, as a

⁴⁶ Ibid., 15-17.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 17-18.

Major General, 4 April 1941.⁴⁸ Patton trained his soldiers hard, and established the same motto as Catherine the Great had had, “hard training: easy in battle” the 2nd Armored soon earned the title as the “Hell on Wheels” division.⁴⁹

Patton built a crack division by insisting the training be tough and demanding. During training cycles in the field, with temperatures high, his soldiers (himself included) were allowed only one canteen of water per day, and were required to run a ten-minute mile every twenty-four hours. Readiness was stressed, and the soldiers were taught to be prepared to move on very short notice. It was not uncommon to find his soldiers sleeping under their trucks or by their tanks at night. He also conditioned them to go without sleep for extended periods of time--at least thirty-six hours at a time. His soldiers all learned the basic survival skills they would need to fight, win, and endure the hell of war.⁵⁰

Soon after the United States entered World War II, on 8 December 1941, Patton was selected to command the Western Task Force landings in North Africa from 30 July to 21 August 1942. Patton successfully led the task force and defeated the French forces at Casablanca, laying the groundwork for Allied occupation of Northern Africa. After this success, Patton was given command of the U.S. II Corps, replacing General Lloyd R. Fredendall on 3 March 1943, following the II Corps’ defeat by German Field Marshall Erwin Rommel’s famed Afrika Korps at Kasserine Pass.⁵¹ When Patton received the command of II Corps on 5 March 1943, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commander of

⁴⁸ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 578.

⁴⁹ Essame, *Patton*, 38.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 39.

⁵¹ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 578.

Allied Forces in Africa, charged Patton to restore the dignity, respect, and morale of the American soldier. Not since the First Battle of Bull Run, during the American Civil War, had an American army taken such a beating. American losses exceeded 3,000 soldiers, killed or wounded; 200 tanks; vast quantities of supplies; and the Germans took 3,721 prisoners.⁵² Patton did not have long to pull the II Corps together as they would soon be committed to support the British 8th Army, commanded by Field Marshall Bernard Law Montgomery, against Rommel's famed 10th Panzer Division.

Patton realized that one of the first things he needed to do before the II Corps could fight again, was to restore their discipline and morale. He set out to do this with a fury that few leaders have been able to unleash on any army, in a very personal way. Noted author and historian H. Essame described Patton's descent on the II Corps in the following way:

He had 11 days to get his corps on its feet. From his own experience, confirmed by years of study, he knew that, no matter how high the intrinsic value of the men in their ranks, armies are useless without discipline and without faith in their leaders. In the next week, displaying the largest stars his aides could produce, escorted by scout cars and half-tracks bristling with machine-guns and to the accompaniment of screeching sirens, armed to the teeth, he swooped down on every single battalion of his four divisions like Moses descending from Mount Ararat. Moses brought with him the Ten Commandments; Patton brought the Army's traditional orders for maintenance of discipline: helmets worn at all times, neckties properly tied and leggings correctly threaded.⁵³

Patton attacked his responsibilities with vigor and, as the new corps commander, in a very short time did turn the unit around, putting them back on a strong enough footing to attack and defeat the German Army—the same one which had defeated them at

⁵² Essame, *Patton*, 68-71.

⁵³ Ibid., 72.

the Kasserine Pass. By the 17th of March the II Corps was ready to go on the offensive, and Patton, three days ahead of Montgomery, opened the battle against Rommel, determined to drive him from Africa. The battle was not easy, and Patton had to relieve General Ward, commander of the 1st Armored Division, but because of the unrelenting pressure of Patton's II U.S. Corps, the Germans were forced to commit three of their divisions against him, including the elite 10th Panzer Division. This enabled the British 8th Army, the main effort, to make significant inroads into German-held territory, which eventually resulted in their expulsion from Africa. Now that the II U.S. Corps was on its feet and beginning the final push with the British against the Germans, the command of the corps was given to General Omar Bradley, Patton's deputy commander. Patton was pulled by Eisenhower to continue the planning for "Operation Husky", the Allied Sicilian invasion, where Patton would command the 7th U.S. Army.⁵⁴ There is little doubt that much of the success of the II U.S. Corps in Africa can be attributed to Patton's tough, stern, and demanding leadership. It is doubtful whether any other officer could have turned a large unit around so quickly and restored its fighting capability the way Patton did.

Patton commanded the 7th Army through the Sicilian Campaign, from 10 July to 17 August 1943, when the last German stronghold of Messina fell to Patton and Montgomery. Though the soldiers of the 7th Army did not love Patton the way the soldiers of the 3rd Army would later in Europe, Patton had established a reputation for being able to get the job done. He was also known as a battle-hardened professional and

⁵⁴ Ibid., 82.

as "the best damn ass-kicker in the whole U.S. Army."⁵⁵ However, his "ass-kicking" reputation got him in trouble when, on 16 August 1943, he carried it too far and slapped a hospitalized "shell-shocked" soldier, whom he deemed a coward. When the incident reached Eisenhower's attention, Patton was sent to England and remained there through the Normandy invasion on the 6 June 1944, until the U.S. 3rd Army arrived in France on 6 July 1944.

Patton assumed command of the 3rd Army as part of General Bradley's 12th Army Group. Patton's 3rd Army was given the role of spearheading the breakout for Allied forces on the Normandy beachheads, and then was to drive his army across France, which he did throughout the summer of 1944. By December of 1944, Patton's 3rd Army had pushed through France to the border of Germany and was attacking into the Saar Valley for the final push to the Rhine River, into the heartland of Germany. Because of this offensive, Patton's 3rd Army would go down in history as one of the finest units to ever fight for our country.

The final example of Patton's mental and physical toughness is seen in the 3rd Army's fight during the Battle of the Bulge. On the 16th of December 1944, Adolf Hitler, dictator of Germany, initiated a winter offensive aimed at splitting the Allied offensive by retaking the port of Antwerp in Belgium. Hitler thought if he could split the Allied coalition by driving a wedge between the U.S. and British forces, he could force the British out of the war--another Dunkirk of 1940. The Allies were taken by surprise when the Germans launched their attack, and the German forces quickly created a salient in the Allied lines, which soon became a large bulge. Thus, the Allies would

⁵⁵ Ibid., 100.

appropriately name the fight the Battle of the Bulge. The German intermediate objectives to reach Antwerp included capturing key communication centers important to the Allied offensive, to include the towns of Bastogne and St Vith, Belgium. General Eisenhower quickly moved the 101st Airborne Division to Bastogne to hold the town at all costs. The Germans, led by heavy armor, surrounded the town of Bastogne.

With the 101st cutoff and in dire circumstances, Patton was given the go ahead to move the 3rd Army from its current offensive posture to relieve the defenders of Bastogne. Within forty-eight hours of receiving Eisenhower's directive, Patton had two of his divisions on their way to Bastogne, and within a week, the bulk of his army, 250,000 strong, were on their way to the bulge. He did the impossible--no one thought any army was capable of leaving a fight in progress, shifting their direction ninety degrees, and then traveling seventy miles in the middle of a winter snow storm, moving 133,000 trucks, tanks, and supplies to attack the Germans in the flank. This was, however, Patton and the 3rd U.S. Army--the toughest, best trained, battle-hardened veterans in the U.S. 12th Army Group. They did the impossible, they relieved the "Battling Bastards of Bastagone" (the 101st Airborne Division), and went on to smash the left flank of the German counterattack, forcing them (by the end of January) back to their pre-offensive lines.⁵⁶

Patton is a legend in the U.S. Army, and is viewed as one of the most successful commanders ever. Like Hannibal, part of his success was a result of his physical and mental toughness, that psychological profile backed by a strong body that can push an army beyond anything they thought possible. He motivated his men in much the same

⁵⁶ Ibid., 222-225.

way that Hannibal had pushed his soldiers over the Alps, through the marshes of Arnus, and across the Rhone River. Patton possessed the same mental and physical toughness as Hannibal, whose effective use of these leadership traits enabled him to extract a little more effort from his soldiers time and again at times when others scorned, or would not even have attempted such feats in the first place. Mental and physical toughness do contribute to battlefield success.

Another important leadership trait that is part of U.S. Army doctrine, described under values, is selflessness. As previously explained in chapter four, Hannibal possessed a high degree of selflessness, as illustrated in the many examples of Hannibal's life to include using his own wealth to furnish supplies and weapons for his army. U.S. Army doctrine states the importance of putting the organization and the nation before oneself:

Selfless-service signifies the proper ordering of priorities. Think of it as service before self. The welfare of the nation and the organization come before the individual. While the focus is on service to the nation, this does not mean that the individual member neglects to take care of family or self. The value does not preclude the Army leader from having a healthy ego or self esteem, nor does it preclude the leader from having a healthy sense of ambition. It does, however, preclude selfish careerism.⁵⁷

A good example of a nineteenth century soldier who exhibited the same high degree of **selflessness** to his organization and nation as Hannibal did was Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Robert E. Lee, born at Stafford, Virginia, on 19 January 1807,

⁵⁷ FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, 4-4 - 4-5.

was the third son of Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee. He was appointed to West Point in 1826, where he graduated second in his class in 1829. He was commissioned in the Engineer Corps, and received recognition for his work on the Mississippi at St. Louis, and New York Harbor defenses from 1836-1846. When the war with Mexico started, Lee earned distinction during the expedition to Mexico by preparing bridges, and his excellent reconnaissance helped General Winfield Scott, commander of the force, capture Veracruz and Cerro Gordo. His efforts also contributed to victories at Contreras and Churubusco Castle on 13 September 1847. He served as the superintendent at West Point from 1852-1855, was promoted to Colonel, and commanded the 2nd Cavalry in St. Louis. He then served in Texas from 1855-1857. He commanded the Department of Texas from February 1860-February 1861, and was recalled to Washington on 4 February 1861. At that point, he resigned his commission in the Union army because his home state of Virginia had seceded from the Union. On 20 April 1861, Lee accepted the command of Virginia military forces and became the military advisor to Confederate President Jefferson Davis on all Confederate forces. Lee created and received command of the Northern Army of Virginia on 1 June 1862, serving in this position until he surrendered his army to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House on 9 April 1865. Lee's selflessness was exhibited throughout his life, but examples will be shown here from the latter part of his life (just prior to the American Civil War and during the war).⁵⁸

At the start of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln offered Lee the command of the Union army, but Lee refused the offer because he could not bring himself to fight against his home state of Virginia. He felt Lincoln's offer was contrary

⁵⁸ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 430.

to his beliefs, values, and ideals, even though from a personal standpoint it would have meant power, prestige, and tremendous responsibility. This one incident sheds deep insight into the true character of Robert E. Lee and demonstrates the kind of selflessness that he would use valiantly during the Civil War.

Prior to receiving the offer from Lincoln, Lieutenant Colonel Lee was serving in Texas with the 2nd Cavalry in the Union army. He was recalled from his duty in Texas after the state voted to leave the Union on 1 February 1861 and was requested to report to General Winfield Scott, in Washington, no later than 1 April. As Lee prepared to leave Texas, one of his subordinates, Captain Richard M. Johnson, asked Lee whether he intended to side with the North or the South. Lee replied, "I shall never bear arms against the Union, but it may be necessary for me to carry a musket in defence[sic] of my native State, Virginia."⁵⁹

Sometime in March of 1861, Lee reported to the office of General Winfield Scott (who, since their association together during the Mexican War, thought very highly of Lee). Scott had frequently referred to Lee as the most promising commander in the field, with great potential for future service to his country. On this occasion, Scott and Lee talked about the deepening strife between the southern and northern states and Scott asked Lee how he felt about the situation. Lee responded that he would not be able to "unsheathe his sword against his native State."⁶⁰ Scott responded by telling Lee that he would not be leading an army of federal troops to fight against southern troops but would,

⁵⁹ Margaret Sanborn, *Robert E. Lee: A Portrait* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1966), 304.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 308.

instead, stand as a deterrent to keep war from erupting between the states. Lee remained unchanged in his views and told General Scott that if Virginia seceded from the Union he (Lee) would have to resign his commission from the army.

On the 18th of April, Lee was again summoned to Washington, this time by the Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, who directed Francis Preston Blair, a close associate of President Lincoln, to feel Lee out concerning his allegiance to the country and make him a definite offer. During the meeting with Mr. Blair, Lee was told that President Lincoln wanted him to take command of the Union army. Lee later wrote, "I declined the offer he made me, to take command of the army that was to be brought into the field, stating as candidly as I could, that, though opposed to secession and deprecating war, I could take no part in an invasion of the Southern States."⁶¹ Blair was unable to convince Lee otherwise, and Lee left Blair's office to see General Winfield Scott. When Scott heard that Lee had refused President Lincoln's offer, he said, "Lee, you have made the greatest mistake of your life; but I feared it would be so."⁶² Scott respected Lee for his decision, however, but went on to say that to stay in government employ was no longer an option and, "If you propose to resign, it is proper that you do so at once; your present attitude is equivocal."⁶³ On 20 April 1861 Lee sent letters of resignation to the Secretary of War and General Scott.

This was not an easy decision for Lee. He most surely would not have made it if he had not believed that his beloved state of Virginia would leave the Union. Lee's

⁶¹ Ibid., 311.

⁶² Ibid., 311.

⁶³ Ibid., 311.

selflessness and loyalty to the state of Virginia, his family, friends, and relatives were stronger than the desire to forward his own self interests as commander of the entire Union army. When he turned down the command of the Union army, Virginia had not yet seceded, nor had he been offered any position in the rising new Confederacy. He believed that he would return home and resume farming after his resignation.⁶⁴ He wrote to his sister, Ann Marshall, describing the agonized feelings he had over this decision: "With all my devotion to the Union and the feeling of loyalty and duty of an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home. . . . I know you will blame me; but you must think as kindly of me as you can, and believe that I have endeavoured to do what I thought right."⁶⁵

Robert E. Lee had a strong reputation of being an unselfish officer and a person who put others before himself. He was not egotistical and did not easily take offense, though he did have a strong temper, which manifested itself from time to time. He was one who rarely displayed emotion, but controlled himself at all times and in all situations. Control and self-denial were part of his credo, and formed the basis of his character. He had a firm belief in the Christian God and made prayer and Bible study an important part of his life. He was not given to vice, was true to his wife, and did not smoke or drink hard liquor, only occasionally drinking wine in small quantities.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Ibid., 313.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 314.

⁶⁶ Richard Harwell, *Lee* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), an abridgment of the four-volume *R. E. Lee* by Douglas Southall Freeman, 114-115.

After Lee resigned from the Union Army, the State of Virginia put Lee in charge of the defense of Virginia. He was appointed by the governor to command the ground and naval forces of Virginia and to work with the Confederate armed forces to defend Virginia from invasion from the North. On 25 April, Virginia ratified a temporary union with the Confederacy, and Lee moved quickly to organize a quartermaster, adjutant general office, and subsistence, medical, and pay departments. It was not long before Virginia officially seceded, and Richmond was designated as the capital of the new Confederacy. Lee was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General and given command of all the Confederate forces operating in the state of Virginia. With Richmond designated as the capital of the Confederacy, it was not long until it became the strategic objective of the Union army, with Congress calling for the seizure of Richmond.⁶⁷

A new Union army was soon assembled and placed under the command of Union General Irvin McDowell to squelch the uprising in the south and seize Richmond. McDowell advanced across northern Virginia with an army of over 35,000, while another Union army, commanded by Major General Robert Patterson, 18,000 strong, was directed against Confederate forces in the Shenandoah Valley, reinforcing McDowell. Lee worked feverishly to pull together a defense of the Confederate capital that would defray Union troops from taking Richmond's rail yards, ports, communication centers, and the key terrain or the heights around the city. Meanwhile, Confederate Brigadier General Pierre G. T. Beauregard and General Joseph E. Johnston were executing Lee's carefully coordinated plan to stop the Union force advance at the strategic Manassas Railroad Junction. On 21 July 1861 a major battle between Confederate and Union

⁶⁷ Ibid., 128-136.

forces occurred, with the Union forces under McDowell being routed by the Confederate forces, and driven from the field. The first major battle of the Civil War had been fought --the “First Battle of Bull Run”--with the Union receiving a resounding defeat.⁶⁸

For weeks, Lee had carefully planned, coordinated, and moved troop units to the locations where they were needed to meet the advancing threat of the enemy. President Davis, however, denied Lee the opportunity to command on the battlefield, instead detaining him to conduct the operation from Richmond. “It was the first time in Lee’s life that he had experienced the anguish of a battle from afar. His relief [upon winning the battle] was greater, perhaps, and his emotions came more completely to the surface than in any other crisis of the war.”⁶⁹ Lee’s logistical contributions and untiring efforts had made the victory at Manassas possible, yet the southern public gave credit for the victory only to General(s) Beauregard and Johnston. Lee’s selfless service--his devotion to a cause greater than himself--enabled him to pull the many facets of the operation together, which was largely responsible for the Confederate army’s first significant battlefield success against their enemies. Lee, unconcerned with who received the credit, was grateful for the victory which saved the Confederate capital from early capitulation and, possibly, an early end to the Confederate cause.

After this campaign, Lee’s first field command was in Western Virginia at the Battle of Cheat Mountain (near Huttonsville, West Virginia) on 12-13 September 1861, where he was repulsed, relinquishing the ground to the federal forces. Following this

⁶⁸ Faust, *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia*, 92.

⁶⁹ Harwell, *Lee*, 137.

defeat, Lee was sent by President Davis to strengthen the shore operations of Charleston, Port Royal, and Savannah from October 1861-March 1862. While serving in this position Lee did a magnificent job. As Union troops took the offensive again, with another drive on Richmond, he was recalled to Richmond to assist General Johnston in its defense. During this campaign, Lee worked in conjunction with Major General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson and initiated the highly successful Valley Campaign from 1 May-9 June 1862. He quickly earned the respect of President Jefferson Davis and was chosen to replace General Johnston, who was wounded at the Battle of Seven Pines, 31 May-1 June 1862. Lee created the Army of Northern Virginia during this campaign, and repulsed Union General George B. McClellan's attempted invasion of Richmond. From this time forth, until the end of the Civil War, Lee would remain in command of the army, achieving great victories, achieved in large part because of his devotion to the Southern cause and his selfless service.⁷⁰

One historian wrote that, even as commander of the largest and most powerful Confederate army, Lee never had a body guard visible, unusual for one of such a high rank, nor was he pretentious, but was down-to-earth and humble. He also described General Lee's headquarters and his living conditions during the Civil War:

Within [headquarters], no article of luxury was to be seen. A few plain and indispensable objects were all which the tent contained. The covering of the commander-in-chief was an ordinary army blanket, and his fare was plainer, perhaps, than that of the majority of his officers and men. . . . Citizens frequently sent him delicacies, boxes filled with turkeys, hams, wine, cordials, and other things . . . but these were almost uniformly sent to the sick in some neighboring hospital. . . . Lee's principle . . . seems to have been to set a good example to his officers of not faring better than their men; but he was undoubtedly indifferent naturally to luxury of all descriptions. . . . His own pleasure and gratification were plain [to see], and gratified others, who, in the simple and kindly gentleman

⁷⁰ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 432.

in the plain gray uniform, found it difficult to recognize the commander-in-chief of the Southern army.”⁷¹

Lee, again, gave a superb example of his selflessness following the crushing defeat of his army at the Battle of Gettysburg, fought 1-3 July 1863. Here, a series of missed opportunities on the first and second of July, failed to dislodge the Union forces from Cemetery Ridge, the high ground overlooking the town of Gettysburg. On day three of the battle, unable to break and roll the Union flanks on the previous two days of fighting, Lee was faced with a decision, either to withdraw his forces from the field or attempt to break the Union line one more time. Upon consulting with his commanders, he found that most of them were of the opinion that they should stay and finish the fight, believing they could drive the Union army from the heights and win the day. The one notable exception to this idea (on Lee’s staff) was Confederate LTG James Longstreet, one of Lee’s corps commanders. He believed their best option was to make a tactical withdrawal to ground of their own choosing, placing themselves between the Union army and Washington, D.C. This would force the Union army to pursue them, and fight them on their terms.⁷²

Lee disagreed with Longstreet, siding with his other commanders. “‘The enemy is there,’ he said, pointing toward the Union line, and ‘I am going to take them where they are.’”⁷³ He made the decision to attack the weakest point of the Union line--the center. Lee believed his battle-tested veterans could overcome the odds facing them, as

⁷¹ Richard Wheeler, *Lee’s Terrible Swift Sword* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1992), 317.

⁷² McPherson, *Gettysburg*, 77.

⁷³ Ibid., 83.

they had at the Battle of Chancellorsville.⁷⁴ Longstreet was given command of the assault. He assembled approximately 15,000 soldiers for a frontal attack against the center of the Union line. Longstreet later wrote, "My heart was heavy . . . I could see the desperate and hopeless nature of the charge and the cruel slaughter it would cause. That day at Gettysburg was the saddest of my life."⁷⁵ Longstreet knew these brave infantrymen would have to cross an open wheatfield a mile wide, with no cover or concealment, before assaulting the Union positions on Cemetery Ridge. They would be exposed to every Union cannon on the battlefield before even reaching the Union infantry positions. This would take a heavy toll on Confederate lives.

To soften up the Federal positions before the infantry attack, every Confederate battery of artillery (over 130 cannon) opened fire on the Union line, hoping to destroy enough of the defenders to enable the infantry, led by MG George Pickett, to break the Union line. As the Confederate artillery finished its preparations (which inflicted only minor damage on the Union forces), the Confederate infantry amassed for the charge, then moved out smartly into the open field for the final assault. As Longstreet had predicted, Union artillery opened fire on the advancing Confederate infantry, tearing gaping holes in their lines. By the time the Confederate infantry reached the Union lines, there were not enough of them left to break the Union center, though a slight penetration of Union defenses was led by Brigadier General Louis Armistead, who fell shortly thereafter, mortally wounded.⁷⁶ The Confederates were repulsed.

⁷⁴ Faust, *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia*, 432.

⁷⁵ McPherson, *Gettysburg*, 84

⁷⁶ Ibid., 91-98.

The cost of the assault was tremendous, with most of the senior officers and soldiers who participated in the attack either killed or wounded. As the survivors of the charge hobbled their way back to Confederate lines, Lee felt the weight of the decision which had cost so many lives. He said to General Cadmus Marcellus Wilcox, one of the surviving brigade commanders of the charge, "All this has been my fault--it is I that have lost this fight, and you must help me out of it the best way you can."⁷⁷ Later, Lee said, "It has been a sad, sad day for us. . . . Too bad! Too bad! Oh, too bad!"⁷⁸ Lee's defeat at Gettysburg was resounding, and he lost the offensive initiative for the rest of the war.

After the disaster at Gettysburg, Lee accepted total responsibility for the defeat, not seeking to blame his subordinates for any of the failure, though clearly they failed to follow his intent and exploit key opportunities prior to Pickett's charge, which could have made the difference in the battle. Lee seemed to verify this point when several years after the war was over he told one Professor White at Lexington College that it was the absence of his corps commander "Stonewall" Jackson, and not the presence of Longstreet or Ewell, that had made the difference at Gettysburg. Lee said, "If I had had Stonewall Jackson with me, so far as man can see, I should have won the Battle of Gettysburg."⁷⁹ (Two examples of lost opportunities were: on the first day, Ewell's Corps failed to take the high ground overlooking Gettysburg from Cemetery Ridge which became the Union

⁷⁷ Harwell, *Lee*, 340.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 341.

⁷⁹ Harwell, *Lee*, 347.

line that Lee could not penetrate; and on the second day of the conflict, Longstreet's Corps failed to take little Round Top on the extreme left of the Union Line.)⁸⁰

Just as Hannibal assumed full responsibility for the defeat of the Carthaginian army after the Battle of Zama, so did Lee after the Battle of Gettysburg. Lee wrote President Jefferson Davis explaining it would probably be in the best interest of the Confederacy if he resigned his position as commander-in-chief of the Northern Army of Virginia. Lee wrote, "I therefore, in all sincerity, request Your Excellency to take measures to supply my place. . . . No one is more aware than myself of my inability for the duties of my position."⁸¹ Davis wrote this response to Lee: "To ask me to substitute you by some one in my judgment more fit to command, or who would possess more of the confidence of the army, or of the reflecting men of the country, is to demand an impossibility."⁸² Lee, at the request of Davis (putting the needs of the Confederacy above his own desires), continued to serve as commander of the Northern Army of Virginia for two more bloody years until the end of the Civil War in 1865.

The final example chosen to demonstrate the selflessness of Lee is when he surrendered his army to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House on 9 April 1865. After the Battle of Gettysburg, Lee's army crossed the Potomac River to return to Virginia, no longer possessing the capability to launch offensive operations in the north. On 9 March 1864, Ulysses S. Grant was appointed commander-in-chief of Union forces and initiated a campaign to capture Richmond and destroy Lee's army. Lee halted

⁸⁰ McPherson, *Gettysburg*, 37-38, 48-55.

⁸¹ Ibid., 346.

⁸² Ibid., 346.

Grant's offensive at the Wilderness, 5-6 May 1864, and then again at Spotsylvania, 8-12 May, and repulsed Grant's assault at Cold Harbor on 3 June. Grant followed this up with an assault across the James River, outmaneuvering Lee, and forcing him to withdraw to Petersburg, 12-16 June 1864. On 3 February 1865, Lee was named commander-in-chief of all Confederate armies. After a long siege, Lee was outflanked at Petersburg by Grant and was forced to abandon Richmond and Petersburg to Federal troops on the 2-3 April 1865.⁸³

Grant pursued Lee's army vigorously, much like the Romans had pursued Hannibal's army before it was finally forced to leave Italy and return to Carthage. Unlike Hannibal, however, Lee was forced to surrender his army to the conqueror in their own territory. Grant prevented Lee from withdrawing to the refuge of the Carolinas, where Lee had hoped to unite with Confederate forces in the south and continue the fight. Under these circumstances--isolated, cutoff, without any hope of reinforcement or supplies, with men dying by the hundreds from disease and starvation--Lee made the toughest decision of his career--to surrender his army. Doing this meant not only the end of the struggle for his soldiers, but in a short time, the end of the Civil War, resulting in a win for the North. Lee, faced with going to see General Grant, said, "I would rather die a thousand deaths."⁸⁴ As his staff agonized over Lee's decision to surrender, one officer questioned how men and history would view the act of surrendering an army in the field. To this Lee remarked, "I know they will say hard things of us. . . . The question is, is it

⁸³ Faust, *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia*, 432.

⁸⁴ Harwell, *Lee*, 483.

right to surrender this army. If it is right, then I will take the responsibility.”⁸⁵ In response to this statement, General Edward P. Alexander proposed to Lee that they disburse the army into smaller numbers, infiltrate through the Union lines, and escape to the south to carry on guerrilla warfare. Lee’s response to Alexander showed the greatness of his character and true selflessness. He explained the futility of continuing to fight and the needless loss of life to Alexander, stating:

General, you and I as Christian men have no right to consider only how this would affect us. We must consider its effect on the country as a whole. Already it is demoralized by four years of war. If I took your advice, the men would be without rations and under no control of officers. They would be compelled to rob and steal in order to live. They would become mere bands of marauders, and the enemy’s cavalry would pursue them and overrun many sections they may never have occasion to visit. We would bring on a state of affairs it would take the country years to recover from.⁸⁶

General Alexander later said he wished he had never made the comment, but everyone present now understood the mind and intent of Lee. Lee did surrender the remainder of his army to Grant on 9 April 1865, thus bringing an end to the Army of Northern Virginia and the South’s hopes of maintaining the Confederacy. Lee’s selflessness, humility, and care and concern for his soldiers’ well-being enabled him to go to Grant, determined to get the best surrender terms possible for his soldiers. He sought no immunity for himself, but only for the relief of his soldiers. Grant signed an agreement with Lee that his soldiers could maintain possession of their horses (in the South, soldiers were required to bring their own horses), return to their homes, keep their side arms, and, most importantly, promised that each soldier would receive full

⁸⁵ Ibid., 484.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 484.

citizenship rights in the Union. Lee's own citizenship was not restored until long after his death.

Like Hannibal, Lee's selflessness earned him the trust and respect of his country and army. Lee's skill, as Hannibal's, " rested on his ability to analyze a situation swiftly and accurately . . . these skills were matched by great strength of character . . . genuine humility, and selflessness; one of the great generals."⁸⁷ Selflessness is truly one of the finest character qualities a leader can possess. Unfortunately, for some leaders, as in the end with Hannibal, those they serve do not always appreciate selflessness. Several years after the II Punic War, when the Romans pressed Carthage to give up Hannibal for trial, his country acquiesced to Roman demands and agreed to turn him over. This forced Hannibal to leave Carthage and flee for his life. However, Hannibal remained true to his country to the very end. Selflessness is an essential trait for any successful leader--on or off the battlefield, as is the trait of adaptability.

The leadership characteristic of adaptability, possessed by Hannibal to an extraordinary degree, is contemporaneously illustrated in the life of General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, retired U.S. Army. Schwarzkopf was born in Trenton, New Jersey, on 22 August 1934. Schwarzkopf followed in his father's military footsteps, pursuing a career in the U.S. Army. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in June of 1956. He was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant and branched in the infantry. Schwarzkopf served two tours during the Vietnam War, the first tour as an advisor to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), and the second tour as a battalion

⁸⁷ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 432.

commander of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, 23rd (Americ) Infantry Division.⁸⁸ Schwarzkopf saw combat during both of these tours. It was during his tours of duty in Vietnam that Schwarzkopf learned and demonstrated the importance of a leader's ability to adapt to changing situations that affect the battlefield.

Schwarzkopf learned soon after his arrival in Vietnam that in order to do the job he was asked to do, he needed to adapt to the culture, tactics, techniques, and procedures of the ARVN units he was assigned to operate with. Schwarzkopf said, concerning his Vietnamese counterparts, "We ate what they ate, slept where they slept, wore the same uniform and suffered the same hardships."⁸⁹ Schwarzkopf said sharing the privations with his Vietnamese counterparts was not universal with all American units or advisors, but he believed by adapting to their ways, it cemented the trust and bond between himself and the ARVN units he served with. This trust in each other extended to successful battlefield operations.

Schwarzkopf relates one specific occasion of adapting to an ARVN custom, after successful duty with an elite ARVN airborne unit, which increased his respect with his ally. He said they had paused in their operations to celebrate with a group of ARVN engineers who had recently completed reconstruction of a destroyed bridge. The ARVN engineers had slaughtered a pig, then filled their glasses with the pig's blood and scotch.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 666.

⁸⁹ H. Norman Schwarzkopf, *General H. Norman Schwarzkopf: The Autobiography: It Doesn't Take a Hero* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), written with Peter Petre, 108.

Schwarzkopf gulped his drink down, and noted later, “Simply by drinking that toast of scotch and blood, I’d begun building ties that would prove vital in battle.”⁹⁰

In the ensuing days and months, the airborne unit to which he was assigned was involved in some very intense combat action. Schwarzkopf’s job was to call for close air support, medical evacuation, and artillery fire for the unit. He fulfilled all of these duties masterfully for his ARVN counterpart, even at the peril of his own life, by staying constantly in the field with them, while other Americans slept in local towns, where air-conditioning and other amenities were found. When other American advisors would ask Schwarzkopf how he could trust the ARVN, when some units had the reputation of leaving their American units or advisors in the middle of the night, Schwarzkopf responded, “They won’t, we’re members of their unit!”⁹¹

Schwarzkopf’s ability to adapt to his unit and changing circumstances paid off in 1965 during the Ia Drang Valley campaign, when the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) embarked on a large offensive to eliminate North Vietnamese (NVA) regulars operating in this strategic area. Schwarzkopf’s elite unit, commanded by Colonel Ngo Truong, was given the mission to block the escape routes of the NVA using the same “tactics Hannibal had used in 217 B.C. when he enveloped and annihilated the Roman legions on the banks of Lake Trasimene.”⁹² Schwarzkopf recalled that Colonel Truong employed unusual tactics to accomplish his mission, relying on years of experience rather than stolid textbook tactics. As the unit prepared their positions to

⁹⁰ Ibid., 110.

⁹¹ Ibid., 121.

⁹² Ibid., 123.

block the NVA escape routes, Troung would look at the map and tell Schwarzkopf the locations where he wanted him to place fire even when it appeared no enemy would be there. Schwarzkopf later said, "I was skeptical at first, but called in the barrages; when we reached the areas we found bodies."⁹³ As the battle ensued, the enemy tried to escape, but Colonel Troung, the ARVN, and the 1st Cavalry Division defeated the NVA in the Ia Drang Valley. Schwarzkopf learned that being adaptable to changing conditions in combat is necessary to bring about success on the battlefield.

After a successful tour as an advisor in Vietnam, Schwarzkopf returned to the states to teach at West Point, then in 1968-1969 attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Following graduation, he could have done a tour at the Office of the Chief of Research and Development in Washington, D.C., using the missile engineering skills he had learned earlier, as a graduate student. Instead, he volunteered to serve another tour in Vietnam where he hoped to command an infantry battalion. Shortly after his arrival in Vietnam, Schwarzkopf realized his desire and was put in command of the 1st Infantry Battalion, 6th Infantry, 23rd Infantry Division. It had the reputation of being the worst unit in the division, if not the country. Accustomed to working with elite airborne forces as an advisor, Schwarzkopf was unprepared for what he found as a battalion commander. He would now have to adapt himself to a different kind of situation in order to bring his unit up to combat effectiveness. His soldiers were demoralized, poorly disciplined, and lacking in positive leadership. They were not doing their missions and were, therefore, ripe for destruction by the enemy.

⁹³ Ibid., 123.

His battalion had been given the mission of policing an area known as the "Rocket Pocket"--a group of foothills near the division rear where the VC liked to launch rockets, causing disruption to the entire area.⁹⁴ His battalion was not effective in doing this mission and the enemy easily infiltrated their lines. This caused unnecessary casualties and disrupted both the battalion and the division. Schwarzkopf did not wait long to begin to restore the discipline and order his unit so desperately needed. Before long, his battalion established a strong perimeter, aggressively patrolled their area of operations, and sought to thwart the enemy attacks through their position. During one of the patrols, a platoon from his battalion inadvertently walked into an old defensive position, which was full of mines. His soldiers found the mines the hard way--by stepping on them and becoming casualties. Schwarzkopf flew into the area by helicopter. As he landed, he saw a soldier who had stepped on a mine, lying on the ground, crying out for help. The wounded soldier was right in the middle of the minefield, screaming with pain. No one dared approach him for fear they, too, would detonate a mine. As no mine detectors or engineers were immediately available, Schwarzkopf personally set out to recover the wounded soldier. Schwarzkopf said he was so scared, his knees were shaking, and he had to grab his legs and steady them before he could take a step.⁹⁵

When he finally got to the wounded soldier, he asked one of his soldiers to get branches from a nearby bush for a splint. The soldier, in reaching for the bush, detonated yet another mine, losing an arm and a leg. The unit realized, then, that they were all in danger, and began to panic. Schwarzkopf, quickly adapting himself to the dangerous

⁹⁴ Ibid., 150.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 170.

situation, told his soldiers to stay put and remain calm. He then told his radio operator to call for engineers and shaving cream. The engineers arrived with metal detectors and the shaving cream and, before long, found the mines and marked them with the cream. Shaving cream was an ingenious idea (like Hannibal's ingenuity when he fastened rafts together and created dirt floors so his elephants would cross the Rhone River), and it worked. The soldiers soon extracted themselves from the minefield and took their wounded to the hospital for treatment.

The 1st Infantry Battalion of the 6th Infantry improved so much that they were eventually moved from their position and given a more demanding, combat-oriented mission. Schwarzkopf knew he was successfully improving his unit when American intelligence captured an enemy report warning Viet Cong (VC) units to stay away from his area of operations (AO) because a strong, new American battalion had moved into the area. Schwarzkopf said it was the finest compliment he could have been paid.⁹⁶

Schwarzkopf ended his tour in Vietnam as a battalion commander, having served a successful second tour. Later, he made full colonel, and served as deputy commander of the 172nd Infantry Brigade at Fort Richardson, Alaska from 1974 to 1976. Schwarzkopf served in a variety of tough, demanding command and staff positions, steadily working his way to the ranks of a general officer. Because of his hard work and dedication, he was eventually appointed commander-in-chief of U.S. Army Central Command (USCENTCOM). While serving in this position, he became responsible for developing the Allied plan and response against Iraq for their invasion of Kuwait on 2

⁹⁶ Ibid., 163.

August 1990.⁹⁷ This would become known as Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the largest Allied and U.S. build-up for war since the Vietnam War. During this campaign, General Schwarzkopf exhibited great adaptability, which was necessary to pull together an Allied coalition which could defend Saudi Arabia and then go on the offensive to retake Kuwait.

This army was multinational and multilingual, much like Hannibal's army of old that consisted of Numidians, Celtiberians, Carpetanians, Africans, Gauls, Iberians, and Balaire slingers to name a few. Schwarzkopf's army would consist of French, British, American, Egyptian, Syrian, Saudi Arabian, Kuwaiti, Moroccan, Nigerian, Omani, Oatari, Pakistani, Senegalese, Czechoslovakian and Polish soldiers.⁹⁸ Their combined presence would number well--over half a million strong. As Schwarzkopf planned for the invasion to liberate Kuwait, he quickly learned there were many elements to consider when forming a multinational military force. For example, the Arab nations, represented in the force, were very hesitant to fight another Arab nation, even if that nation was clearly in the wrong. Therefore, they refused to have their forces used for any part of the offensive operation, except in liberating Kuwait. They would not allow their forces to enter Iraqi territory. It was also determined that, in the best interest of politics for the region, the Arab nations should be the ones to liberate the city of Kuwait. Therefore, Schwarzkopf had to make sure that his battle plans accommodated all the military and political considerations of the different forces. The foremost consideration was to keep the Allied coalition together, and doing this meant keeping Israel out of the war. If Israel

⁹⁷ Dupuy, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, 666.

⁹⁸ Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, 404.

had entered the war, the Arab coalition would not have remained united against Iraq. Schwarzkopf constantly had to urge the Israelis to stay out of the war (especially after Iraq launched Scud Missile attacks against them), promising them that the Allies were doing everything in their power to neutralize the Iraqi missile systems.

As Operation Desert Shield (the defense of Saudi Arabia) transitioned to Desert Storm (the mission to liberate Kuwait), Schwarzkopf received numerous reinforcements, which doubled the size of his army. The increase of forces demanded tremendous logistical support, without which the operation could not have been successful. Changes to war plans were constantly being made, right up until the time the coalition forces began their final preparations for the offensive. For example, the British did not want to see “their boys relegated to the supporting attack,”⁹⁹ so Schwarzkopf told General Colin Powell (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), “I didn’t see how we could refuse that kind of request from a close ally, even if it was purely political and not military in intent. So we made the changes.”¹⁰⁰ Schwarzkopf had to be adaptable to accommodate the necessary changes and the requests of all the forces involved in the operation. Once all the pieces were in place, the elements from each country understood their roles, and the politicians had agreed to a timeline and approved the attack plan, offensive operations could commence. Operation Desert Storm was launched on 17 January 1991, at 0300 and continued until 28 February at 0800. This mighty coalition force would pound Iraq’s infrastructure and military for five weeks before initiating a carefully coordinated ground attack, which would totally defeat the Iraqi army in one hundred hours.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 386.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 386.

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, like Hannibal with his multinational coalition army, accomplished a great victory. It was similar in scope to Hannibal's victory at Cannae. In modern times, it was the greatest victory since the landing of UN forces at Inchon, during the Korean War. There is little doubt that Operation Desert Shield/Storm required Schwarzkopf to be highly adaptable. He adjusted his forces right to the last minute, as needed, to achieve ultimate success with very little loss of life on the battlefield. The proper execution of this important trait kept the coalition together and decisively defeated the fourth largest army of the world.

The relevance of Hannibal's leadership characteristics is seen from the examples cited above and conclusively demonstrates that there are core leadership principles which transcend all ages and periods and are applicable to our time. Hannibal lived over 2,000 years ago, yet we can learn from him that courage, confidence, communication, mental and physical toughness, selflessness and adaptability are leadership characteristics/values that we should employ as leaders today. These principles can be found in our doctrines and, even more importantly, in the examples of our leaders. Thus, the great warriors of the past, like Hannibal, can contribute to our success on the battlefield if, as leaders today, we will emulate their leadership traits and seek to imbue these principles in ourselves and in the soldiers that we lead.

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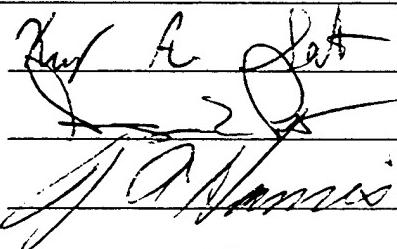
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